Daily Report

East Europe

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FBIS-EEU-96-076 *18 April 1996*

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Albania: Soldiers Guard Montenegro Border; Trade Halts

AU1704142896 Tirana KOHA JONE in Albanian 17 Apr 96 p 7

[Article by Ylli Pata: "Soldiers and Machine Guns on Lake Shkoder"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Shkoder—Lake Shkoder has finally been blockaded. Hundreds of heavily armed soldiers guard border crossing points with Montenegro night and day. The naval vessel Borda, carrying reinforcement troops, has blocked the strait of Shegan, through which cross-border trade passed for four years, reported one of the traders who recently tried to undertake his usual trip. It has been one week since traders from Shkoder were last able to cross the lake to Montenegro. Yugoslav authorities have decided to ask for a border crossing tax of 20 German marks, hoping thereby to fill the federal treasury. However, this tax of 20 German marks is very high for the Albanian traders selling goods in Tuzi market. Hitherto, the profits from the taxes on Albanian merchants went into the pocket of the Montenegrin republican government. However, it seems that this aroused the jealousy of the federal government which wants to fill the depleted coffers of rump Yugoslavia. This puts an end to the trade that has for four years maintained thousands of inhabitants of Shkoder. Without any other hope of a livelihood and faced with high customs duties, many traders used to cross via the straits of Shegan, which Shkoder people called the straits of travail. Dozens of people lost their lives in Lake Shkoder in their efforts to make an ordinary living. The most terrible incident was the tragic drowning of 10 people who had set off to Montenegro to sell goods in stormy weather in December 1995. It is thought that the measures in recent days have put a final end to this trade that supported thousands of otherwise unemployed citizens of Shkoder.

Albania: Banks To Base Interest Rates on Market Movements

AU1704150396 Tirana KOHA JONE in Albanian 17 Apr 96 p 15

[Article by Milto Baka: "Deposits Earn More"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The bulletin of the Albanian Savings Bank has announced a decision by the management board to increase the interest rates on bank deposits in leks.

The bulletin states that these interests rates will apply from 5 April. The funds of state enterprises deposited in the bank are considered as immediate-access deposits.

Mr. Llazi Balliu, director of the Albanian Savings Bank Accounting Department, told KOHA JONE that "The new interest rates are a result of the normal course of the bank's work. The banks in Albania have always followed the interest-rate policy operated by the Bank of Albania. At the moment, the Bank of Albania has laid down only minimum interest rates, and other banks have acted on their own initiative to establish their own rates. The Savings Bank has decided to increase interest rates significantly, having watched current trends. This does not mean that interest rates will not fall or rise further in the future."

This essentially means that the banks will in the future play with interest rates in response to movements of the markets.

	Kind of Deposit	Interest Rate (percent)
	Was	Becomes
Immediate access and current accounts	2	2
Three-month deposits	10.5	12.5
Six-month deposits	13	14
12-month deposits	13.8	15

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Bulgaria: Secret Letter to NATO Accidentally Leaked

AU1804101396 Sofia STANDART NEWS in Bulgarian 18 Apr 96 p 3

[Article by Lyudmila Zasheva: "Pirinski, Videnov Clash Over Letter to NATO"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A blunder caused by a misunderstanding between the Foreign Ministry, the Council of Ministers, and parliament became evident yesterday. Georgi Dimitrov, head of the Foreign Ministry "International Organizations" Department, surprisingly told journalists that "the governmental document on the dialogue with NATO is secret, and we cannot show it to you." However, most of the mass media had already received the document's text from parliament.

Last week, the diplomat brought to Brussels the document which outlines Bulgaria's view on NATO's expansion. Dimitrov personally handed the document to Gebhard von Moltke, NATO's deputy secretary general.

Prior to Dimitrov's trip to Brussels, the document was supposed to be discussed by the parliamentary Commissions on Foreign Policy and on National Security. "It was distributed to the commissions because they were supposed to issue their position, but we are also relying on our deputies' discretion," Dimitrov told the journalists. The Foreign Ministry did not know that dozens of copies of the document were prepared and distributed not only to the commissions, but also to all deputies and the parliamentary correspondents.

"No one told us that the document is secret," sources in the parliamentary Press Center said. The practice there is that all documents submitted to the National Assembly are distributed to the deputies and the journalists.

The document was approved by the government on 28 March and already on the following day sent to parliament with the signature of Valentin Korkinov, chief secretary of the Council of Ministers. Afterward Sendov ordered its distribution through the usual channels.

Bulgaria: Moldovan Prime Minister Meets Videnov

AU1704173196 Sofia Khorizont Radio Network in Bulgarian 1600 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] This afternoon, Moldovan Prime Minister Andrei Sangheli, who is on an official visit to Bulgaria, held talks with Bulgarian Government leader Zhan Videnov. Following the one-to-one meeting, talks were held between the two government delegations.

Bulgaria and Moldova are encountering similar problems in the period of transition. Their positions on all the current problems of contemporary international life are similar, and the tradition of friendship between the two peoples requires much more intensive cooperation between us, Mr. Videnov said following the meeting.

At the Moldovan visitor's meeting with National Assembly Chairman Blagovest Sendov, satisfaction was expressed with the level of interparliamentary cooperation. It emerged after the meeting that a Bulgarian parliamentary delegation led by Nora Ananieva will visit Moldova in early May. The Moldovan prime minister was received by Bulgarian President Zhelyu Zhelev, who expressed gratitude to him for the good conditions under which the Bulgarians in Moldova have the opportunity to develop their national, cultural, and spiritual identity. In Mr. Sangheli's opinion, Moldova needs more Bulgarian language teachers since there are good possibilities to study the language in many schools in Moldova. The two leaders also discussed issues relating to bilateral cooperation, which they agreed is developing well.

Now we will hear our correspondent Kalina Stancheva, who will report on the concluding news conference in the Boyana Residence.

[Stancheva—live] Good evening. One hour ago, in the Boyana Residence in Sofia, Prime Ministers Zhan Videnov and Andrei Sangheli signed four intergovernmental agreements: a consular convention, an agreement on mutual protection and encouragement of investments, an agreement on air communications, and a tourism agreement.

At the news conference that the two government leaders are giving at this moment, Andrei Sangheli assessed his visit as full of content and very successful. He added that he expects that the results will mainly be reflected in the economic sector—the agroindustrial complex and transportation. The Bulgarian and Moldovan Government have a common desire to encourage the links between economic agents and to exploit the unutilized potential for cooperation in the humanitarian field, the Moldovan prime minister said.

In his statement, Bulgarian Prime Minister Zhan Videnov said that our cooperation is developing intensively and successfully. This is also due to the efforts of the 90,000 Bulgarians who live on Moldovan territory and who unite us historically and spiritually, with the common conviction that in the future they will become a factor for the closeness between the two states, all the more because the internal legislation in Moldova enables the Bulgarians there to fully implement their rights. Videnov added that the Bulgarian Government commits itself to continue to encourage direct contacts between

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regions, mutual trade, and cooperation in tourism and the humanitarian field.

Asked by the Bulgarian National Radio correspondent about the likely economic results of the new Bulgarian-Moldovan accords, the Bulgarian prime minister mentioned in his answer the promising contacts in transportation, goods handling, and agricultural engineering and the supply of complete installations for the food and meat-processing industry. He particularly stressed cooperation in the energy industry, bearing in mind that the two countries occupy transit positions, which makes it advantageous for us to seek intensive methods to settle on a multilateral basis the issues relating to the joint production, transit, and marketing of electric power in third markets. In the Bulgarian prime minister's view, the same applies with equal force to cooperation in transportation between Bulgaria and Moldova, bearing in mind Corridor No. 9 from the Baltic.

Bulgaria: Belgrade's Secret Plot Said To Include Sofia

AU1804102796 Sofia TRUD in Bulgarian 18 Apr 96 pp 1, 21

[Unattributed commentary: "They Are Including Us in Pact With Russia, Serbia"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The authorities in Belgrade are preparing to establish a political alliance between Bulgaria, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia [FRY], Russia, and Romania. The plan was concocted by the united leftist forces in the FRY led by Mira Markovic, the wife of Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic. The alliance has been coordinated by communists from the four countries. This was reported at a news conference by Vuk Draskovic, leader of the opposition Serbian Renewal Movement, as quoted by the BBC.

According to this scenario, if the communist Gennadiy Zyuganov wins the elections, the regimes in Bulgaria and Romania should be destabilized. The plan envisages the establishment of a new Warsaw Pact, which will be called the Belgrade Pact. It also envisages the withdrawal of Montenegro from the FRY. In this case, a scenario on unification according to Zyuganov's model will be activated and a new alliance of socialist states created.

This is not the first warning from the Serbian opposition about Bulgaria being included in new alliances. According to the BBC, this could be a sign of the existence of secret plans along the Sofia-Belgrade line that which the Bulgarian socialist government is unaware of.

In February, Serbian opposition figure Zoran Djindjic accused Milosevic's Socialist Party of secretly financing the communists in Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary. The Belgrade rulers have been accused of planning the creation of a new Balkan Communist International.

Bulgaria: Financial Crisis Closes Arsenal Arms Plant

AU1804083596 Sofia KONTINENT in Bulgarian 18 Apr 96 p 1

[Article by Nedyalka Filipova: "Arsenal Stops Work"]

[FBIS Translated Text] KONTINENT learned that if the proposal of the Arsenal Weapons Plant leadership is accepted, by 1 May 10,000 workers will be sent on compulsory leave.

The Arsenal chiefs proposed to release the workers even before Easter, but the Confederation of Independent Trade Unions and the Podkrepa Labor Confederation categorically objected.

Stanislav Nenov, deputy director on routine and administrative issues, said that such an issue has not been discussed at all. Nevertheless, on the first day after the holiday shift, foremen have explained to the workers the conditions for beginning the leave, Arsenal employees told KONTINENT yesterday. First of all, the workers will use their three-week paid annual leave. From 1 to 15 June, they will be on unpaid leave.

Workers who have no paid annual leave will have to go, alarmed workers said. Only about 2,000 workers will be left to maintain the equipment.

Sources say that the Arsenal leadership's proposal is only one of several versions related to overcoming the grave crisis. There are also other versions, but this one will be discussed first.

Yesterday the trade unions disseminated a declaration in which they ask the workers not to sign any leave requests. Krum Khristov, Arsenal executive manager, has departed urgently for Sofia.

The Union of Democratic Forces [SDS] organization in Kazanluk has also prepared a declaration that expresses concern with Arsenal's fate. The SDS intends to utilize the upcoming visit of SDS presidential candidate Petur Stoyanov in Kazanluk on 27 April in order to raise more noise over the issue. Four days ahead of Stoyanov, National Assembly Chairman Sendov will visit Kazanluk.

Arsenal has to close because in the last few months it has sunk into the gravest production and financial crisis in the 60 years of its existence. According to statistical data, trade in special products reached its lowest point in 1995.

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Bulgaria: Politicians Urged To Resolve Arsenal Crisis

AU1804091496 Sofia KONTINENT in Bulgarian 18 Apr 96 p 6

[Commentary by Stanimir Vuglenov: "Arsenal Trump Card"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Some 10,000 Arsenal Weapons Plant workers will say "farewell to arms" on 1 May—International Labor Day.

It has been envisaged that their compulsory leave will last two and a half months. However, no one could be certain as to how long it will really continue. No one could know when the 10,000 workers could return to work.

The "disarmament" of Arsenal comes after dozens of promises, generously given in the past. Politicians, presidential advisers, and trade union leaders took part in making promises. No one could guarantee what the plant needed most of all—markets. As a result, production worth millions of dollars is stored in the warehouses of our greatest arms plant.

Now the Arsenal card becomes a strong trump in the presidential elections campaign. It is anticipated that by the end of the month both candidates—Petur Stoyanov of the Union of Democratic Forces and National Assembly Chairman Blagovest Sendov, the assumed candidate of the Bulgarian Socialist Party—will have to try and overtrump the Arsenal card when they visit Kazanluk.

It is certain that narrow party games—whether poker or bridge—will bring nothing in the future. It is time to stir first the members of the Intergovernmental Bulgarian-Russian Economic Commission. Otherwise it would appear that they are only utilizing problems such as the one of Arsenal in order to visit the "fraternal" country. No one knows whether or not they are playing all sorts of games there (with or without cards), while here production is rusting in the warehouses and the workers are being sent on compulsory leave.

Bulgaria: Finance Minister Kostov Views Economic Reform

AU1604152896 Sofia PARI in English (Special supplement) 16 Apr 96 p 3

[Interview with Bulgarian Finance Minister Dimitur Kostov by an unidentified PARI representative; place and date not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [PARI] Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria is now experiencing serious financial difficulties. The reforms in other countries of Central and Eastern Europe are producing convincing results, while Bulgaria is already treated as a different case. What has drifted us apart from those countries?

[Kostov] The factors, which are seen as inhibiting the whole group of transition countries, have affected the different countries to varying degrees. Bulgaria has been affected by absolutely all negative factors—to a considerable degree. For example, the disintegration of COMECON [CEMA—Council for Mutual Economic Assistance] has had grave consequences for all these countries. Bulgaria, however, was probably the only country to be as much as 80 percent dependent on the COMECON market.

Bulgaria began its transition process with a debt crisis, which isolated it from the international financial markets, cutting off access even to normal commercial financing. Poland was in a similar situation but was hit leas seriously by the collapse of COMECON because economic restructuring there started back in 1980-81.

All sanctions which the United Nations has been imposing in the last four or five years have practically punished Bulgaria as well. Poland does not have so much to claim, say, from Iraq. In purely geographical terms, Poland is on the "right side" of the Yugo-embargo. Our route to the German market, for example, was doubled during the last three years. And the length of the route is far from being the only problem.

All this has been building up: The environment for the Bulgarian reform has been far less enabling than for the rest of the countries. Of course, this should not sound like justification. It is a fact which the Government is taking into account when it formulates its economic policy.

[PARI] The Cabinet has been running the country for 15 months. How far has it managed to reverse the tendencies in the development of the economy, considering that its current state is far from flourishing?

[Kostov] A number of things have been achieved in economic policy. Annual inflation was brought down to a quarter of the previous level, and in 1995 the average monthly rate of inflation dropped to a third of the earlier-year figure. In real terms the GDP grew 2.5 percent last year. Unemployment diminished from more than 600,000 to some 400,000 within the space of a year. Objectively, 1995 was the best of the five years since the reform began.

[PARI] Still, the financial crisis is a fact, and structural adjustment is clearly overdue.

[Kostov] I do not underrate the existing problems. Achievements, however, should be viewed from their

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angle and not vice versa. They are our benchmarks in formulating current priorities, targets, and tasks of a productive economic policy.

The key problem is to achieve a better balance between macroeconomic policy and the policy of structural adjustment. We want to maintain an equilibrium between the basic components of economic policy: the central bank's monetary policy, fiscal policy, structural adjustment of the real sector—to combine our moves in a way to move the economy toward a sustainable low-inflation growth. This means that the economy should be actually restructuring in conditions of appropriate macroeconomic equilibrium. This means sufficiently firm and tight fiscal policy, as well as sufficiently firm and tight monetary policy of the central bank.

[PARI] Fiscal policy, however, should leave enough breathing space for economic development],. Which implies investment in the creation of new product lines in replacement of outdated facilities and technologies.

[Kostov] Investment is a function of saving. Saving, however, is going on not only in households, but in the country as a whole. The increment of savings in the budget and the increment of savings in the households have an absolutely identical impact on investment. This is a fact which is proved by empirical evidence as well. The transition economies which grow fast, by 5-6 percent, such as the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, have a rate of budget revenues to GDP in the order of 40-42 percent. The comparable proportion for Bulgaria is 35 percent.

Of course there are other examples as well. In Hong Kong, Singapore and South Korea the growth came from low taxes, but during that time people there were living on a bowl of rice and well armed police. No social programmes or anything else. Their public spending at that time was half ours now. The Asian model rests on the bowl of rice and not on the low taxes. It all boils downs to the propensity to save which, in turn, rests on the confidence in the banking system and the financial markets.

[PARI] Real incomes in Bulgaria have been halved in the last five years. What talk can their be of any savings, whatever the nation's traditional propensities might be?

[Kostov] There are savings even in the poorest countries, which have no money turnover at all. The problem, however, is in the confidence in the banking system and brings home the pressing need to do something about it. This is the whole point of all the efforts we are making to work out a plan and a system of action to find a way our of the difficulties in the banking sector. This sector encapsulates the problems of the entire economy, brings the structural reform into focus. Our programme of action, which is already being implemented, targets not only the banks but also the enterprises. The efforts to accelerate privatization are also geared in this direction. We count on the progress of privatization to build a different type of relations between economic agents and to make the economic system more flexible and adequate in its behaviour and reactions to macroeconomic indicators.

[PARI] The effect of mass privatization will not make itself felt this year, even if everything comes along according to schedule.

[Kostov] The financial effect will make itself felt immediately. When people come to feel owners of property and assume the responsibility for the management of this property, this automatically means that the losses with the new ownership will be far smaller, and far more savings will be channelled into investment.

Suffice it to change the way of thinking and acting. The very fact that a substantial part of the economy is being privatized will make the non-privatized companies think in a different way.

[PARI] You pin your hopes on the creation of a new and healthier climate?

[Kostov] It all boils down to this. The economy is not an abstract thing, it consists of humans who make decisions at any given moment. It is a living organism, or rather the results of multiple individual decisions.

[PARI] It is common knowledge that the money-losing state-owned companies are the worst debtors to the Exchequer and to the banks. For years there has been talk of a closure of those in the direst straits. Will anything really be done about it this year?

[Kostov] The process will take place even before the middle of this spring. We are scrutinizing all enterprises, one by one, and we assess their viability. Look, I see this process as a cycle. For starters, there will be 50 or 100. Once we cope with them, we will go on to the next.

There are 4,900 public enterprises in this country, of which 3,600 are state-owned and the rest are municipal property. Of the total, 2,000 or so cannot earn enough income to cover the cost of raw materials and purchased services, let alone wages. Of these 2,000, about half are small-sized companies which are already in a process of closure. Some of them, however, perform social functions. All thermoelectric power stations and 70 percent of the mines fall into this category at present. And this is an energy sector, in which the state of finances does not involve just inefficient production

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but also the need to restructures the entire sector. The assessment process will be completed before the end of the year, and the next steps in the structural adjustment of these utilities will proceed from its results.

It should also be borne in mind that there are enterprises which perform above all social functions. There is but a single employer in some population centres and entire parts of the country. In such cases, it should be considered which would be cheaper: to close this single enterprises and pay the redundancies unemployment benefits, or to subsidize its continued existence. Also in this connection, we are taking action to encourage private enterprise and create jobs in such areas.

[PARI] Would you be more specific about that?

[Kostov] The major project for establishment of an investment and development bank, which has been approved by the Government and which awaits coulfication by Parliament, is directed at this. This is also the idea of the World Bank projects, even though they are making slow progress: the Agricultural Development Project (ADP) and the Private Investment and Export Finance Project (PIEF). This is also the intended use of resources pooled into the Occupational Training and Unemployment Fund. Part of this money is for loan financing of newly established small businesses; in this case the Fund is sued to encourage job creation rather than social assistance.

[PARI] What are the areas of intended action in the Government's programme for stabilization of the banking system?

[Kostov] Our foremost priority is to fill the existing legislative gap. The bankruptcy provisions in the Commercial Code expressly do not apply to banks. It is not clear how a bank could be adjudicated bankrupt and action taken to satisfy creditors' claims.

[PARI] The banks, however, habe been and still are on the receiving end of the inefficient economy. Financial problems in the economy build up there as the last stop.

[Kostov] Indeed, the entire economy has been facing heavy odds, I already mentioned that. A large part of the banks' problems have resulted from their failure to adapt their operation fast enough and to stop lending on the basis of non-economic decisions.

[PARI] As a matter of fact, legislation did not deter these actions of theirs, either. Loans contracted by state-owned companies were long unsecurable by a mortgage on their property, and it is still extremely difficult to realize the collateral pledged by a defaulting debtor.

[Kostov] Yes, we are paying serious attention to this, too, in a separate draft legislation—the Collateral Law.

[PARI] How far has work on this bill gone?

[Kostov] It is not in an advanced phase, but by the middle of the year the Ministry of Justice will be ready with the draft.

[PARI] Is this the bill that will complete the legal framework of bank stabilization?

[Kostov] Apart from the bank insolvency amendments to the Banks and Lending Act, some other amendments are needed as well to approximate banks' accounting to international standards so as to be clear what is going on inside the banks. These are the central bank's ordinances, the prudential regulations. The Bulgarian bank standards match the universally accepted European and international standards. The trouble is that they do not say exactly how the banking system will move from its current state and attain the high standards and requirements. Parallel to the completion of the legal framework, the capabilities to enforce it should be developed. I am referring to banking supervision, whose role must be enhanced. Its administrative capacity must be increased so that on-site supervision of banks could be exercised along with better off-site supervision.

[PARI] What measures are envisaged for recapitalization of the sector?

[Kostov] A package of administrative measures is envisaged for further consolidation of state-owned banks. Privatization is also contemplated as a way to rehabilitate the banking sector. We do not regard recapitalization as a form of funnelling fresh money to the state-owned banks. What matters now are the measures to rehabilitate them, part of which is recapitalization, steering them towards sound banking. In other words, when all necessary measures are taken to ensure sound banking, these efforts could be supported by a form of recapitalization.

[PARI] How much will the structural adjustment of the sector cost?

[Kostov] It will cost a lot, and this is part of the overall prices of the structural reform. Enterprise restructuring also costs money. The price of structural adjustment as a whole requires the balance between macroeconomic stabilization and economic restructuring proper. From a macroeconomic point of view, the public purse should try to limit spending to the funds it raises through the tax system. The opposite is also true: There should be no taxes without structural adjustment. Obviously, the way things are going this year calls for speedier implementation of structural policy measures. This presupposes shifting the weight of structural reform costs ahead of time. I am referring to what will be paid for bank rehabilitation and enterprise liquidation. At the same time, the international financial institutions

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are ready to help this country cope with that strain on its finances. That was the gist of our talks with the World Bank and the IMF.

[PARI] Do you think we could strike a deal on new loans soon?

[Kostov] I think this is realistic. From the point of view of the budget it is not that important to get the loans but to get them on the basis of concrete action for adjustment because this is the guarantee that these loans wills not then burden the budget and the economy but will be serviceable—I mean the country's new debts and old debts alike.

Bulgaria: Caution Urged Over Turkish Investment

AU1704102796 Sofia DEMOKRATSIYA in Bulgarian 17 Apr 96 p 3

[Commentary by Irina Yordanova: "Dogan's Optimism—Half-Unfounded"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday in Ankara, in an interview for Radio Free Europe, Rights and Freedoms Movement [DPS] leader Dogan said that the bridge of goodneighborly relations between Bulgaria and Turkey must be repaired. According to him, this could happen by investing in Bulgaria.

In recent years, Turkey has been giving priority to its economic interest in Central Asia, while the Balkans has been relegated to a secondary position. Ahmed Dogan is right in saying that the Turkish businessmen and the Turkish Government must be encouraged to invest in Bulgaria. The DPS leader is capable of arousing Turkey's economic interest, as was confirmed by the fact that yesterday he was received by Turkish President Suleyman Demirel. However, the political reluctance on the part of Turkey's leaders toward putting Turkish capital into regions with a mixed population is well known. Turkish businessmen are hardly likely to respond with any special enthusiasm to Dogan's appeal. This is so not because they do not believe him, but because they know that no legal guarantees, intergovernmental agreements, or preferences exist in Bulgaria. The withdrawal of the Rover concern from Bulgaria, after investing more than $10 million, is indicative.

The parliamentary majority amended the Foreign Investments Bill in a manner that, instead of encouraging such investment, rather created conditions for curbing them. By amending the Bill on the National Bank Activity, the socialist majority officially admitted the country's financial bankruptcy. If Ahmed Dogan's cup of promises about Turkish investments proves to be half full, we had better view it as half empty, simply because there is no reason for any optimism in the field of investment.

It is the government that should be encouraging and attracting investment to Bulgaria. For a year and a half, the government has been doing precisely the opposite. The socialist parliamentary majority and Videnov's cabinet has placed Bulgaria in the last place in the line for foreign investment.

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Czech Republic: John Major Stresses UK Support for EU Growth

AU1704162496 Prague MLADA FRONTA DNES in Czech 17 Apr 96 p 12

[Article by British Prime Minister John Major: "Britain Supports the Expansion of the European Union"]

[FBIS Translated Text] I am very pleased that I am able to visit Prague so soon after the state visit by Her Majesty the Queen. We were deeply touched in Great Britain by the warmth and friendship with which the Czech people welcomed the queen and the duke of Edinburgh. It was a vivid reminder of the mutual affinity between our two nations. And once again I have been made clearly aware of the strength and explicitness of the Czech people's resolve to reclaim their historical place in the heart of Europe.

From my point of view, it is absolutely clear that this should be soon. NATO, the OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe], and the Council of Europe have to play their role; they have to reunite this continent, a continent freed from the sufferings of the recent past, and create a safe, stable, and equal Europe.

The key to this, however, lies in expanding the EU. Britain's support for EU expansion has never been clearer. In the five years that I have been prime minister, this has always been one of my main priorities. Great Britain expects deeds and not just nice words. I am personally convinced that our generation cannot afford to squander this historical opportunity to create a larger, democratic, free, and prosperous Europe.

Some people are complaining, however, that the process of expanding the EU is too slow. They are asking if the EU member states are really interested in this expansion.

I understand their impatience. The Czech Republic has implemented remarkable changes in its society, political system, and economy. It has a right to expect that its European friends will duly appreciate these changes.

In fact, we have already made great progress toward our joint aim. And Great Britain has always been at the forefront of the effort to promote this aim within the European Union.

For example, the European agreements intended to bring the Czech Republic and the other countries of Central Europe to full membership in the EU are, to a considerable extent, the result of practical British thinking. Their preparation was a central theme of Great Britain's presidency of the European Union in 1992.

The mutual dialogue and practical cooperation that already exist between the EU states and the Czech Republic and the other applicants—in foreign and security policy and in areas such as the campaign against drugs and organized crime—proceed from an initiative that Great Britain and Italy started together in 1993.

I was also pleased that, at the EU summit in December 1994, the EU's leading representatives supported the British proposal that the talks on affiliation be commenced six months after the IGC [Intergovernmental Conference] and agreed that the association strategy should be as positive and useful as possible for the new member states.

What does this mean from a practical point of view? Great Britain wants the Czech Republic and the other applicants for membership from Central Europe to be able to export agricultural products to the EU market more easily. We want the talks on affiliation to begin soon. And we would like to continue to offer you practical assistance in transferring to a market economy, first and foremost, through our Know-How Fund.

So, the British strategy is clear. What else can we and you do to make sure that it works?

First, we all have to be clear on what still has to be done. This will be a long and sometimes hard task for the Czech Republic and the other Central European countries. It is necessary to amend the existing laws and adopt new ones so that they correspond to EU norms.

Membership in the European Union also means being able to implement and regulate these laws correctly. Changing the attitudes and administrative structures created during the course of 40 years of political stagnation is a very demanding task. But you have already made a great deal of progress in this regard.

Second, the countries of Central Europe have to maintain the pace of economic reform. I know that it is painful. But the fruits of your labor are already manifesting themselves clearly: New jobs are being created as a result of foreign investment, and new businesses are being established as a consequence of privatization and increased economic growth. Just as an example, Britain's trade with Central Europe is growing faster than with any other part of the world: Last year it recorded an increase of almost one-third. This is good for us and for you.

But the burden of the changes lies not only on you. It also lies on the European Union. Because, third, the European Union also has to get ready. Some EU practices are not suitable for the second half of the 1990's, to say nothing of the new century—specifically, our common agricultural policy, which has to be reformed. It is expensive for both the taxpayers and the consumers. It supports overproduction. And, it will become less and less compatible with Europe's

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commitments within the framework of GATT, with a more liberal agricultural market, and with expansion. In its current state, the common agricultural policy would cause as many problems for the economies of the Central European countries as it is causing Great Britain—and maybe even more. The European Union has to further reform the structural and cohesion funds that are already too expensive and, furthermore, are unsustainable. We have to face up to these problems and do so very soon to ensure that they do not slow down the EU's expansion later.

The EU member states also have to get ready to accept the European institutions. We commenced the Intergovernmental Conference in Turin last month; it should review the EU's intentions. During the discussions on improving the EU's efficiency and effectiveness, Great Britain will always bear in mind the expansion of the European Union.

I am certain that the outcome of this conference will be a sensible and adequate review of the conventions. We will only accept such an outcome. Then, the European Union will be able to strive more flexibly for its most important priority—expansion. My aim is to make sure that the talks on affiliation begin, at the latest, during the British presidency of the European Union—in 1998. Great Britain will undoubtedly focus its activities on this aim, and I am sure the Czech Republic will do the same. You have a great deal you can contribute to the European Union. I am looking forward to your doing so.

Czech Republic: Britain's Major Ends Visit to Republic

LD1804092096 Prague Radiozurnal Radio Network in Czech 0800 GMT 18 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] British Prime Minister John Major ended his visit to the Czech Republic shortly after 0900 today. He left for Kiev, from where he will continue on to the Moscow nuclear summit. Olga Krupauerova reports:

[Krupauerova] At a short briefing at Ruzyne Old Airport, British Prime Minister John Major said that the Czech Republic was a good friend. He stressed that widening of the European Union was the most important task this European structure was facing. As to the widening of NATO, Major said that the Czech Republic would belong, together with its neighbors, to the group of first countries to enter NATO.

Asked what he thought about Moscow's demand to talk only about political membership in NATO, the British prime minister said that discussion on political aspects of NATO was a question for the distant future.

John Major at the same time condemned the bomb explosion in London this morning, which is being attributed to the IRA. He stressed that the peace process will continue in Northern Ireland despite this incident.

Czech Republic: Iranian Minister, Parliament Official Meet

LD1704191096 Tehran IRNA in English 1747 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Czech [Republic], April 17, IRNA—The chairman of foreign policy commission of the Czech parliament in a meeting on Wednesday with Iran's deputy foreign minister, Mahmud Va'ezi, described the expansion of his country's cooperation with the Islamic countries, especially Iran, as the republic's new era's foreign policy priorities.

He said parliamentarian cooperation is conducive to expansion of mutual relations and evaluated relations between the two countries as very positive.

Mahmud Va'ezi described the role of parliaments in expansion of mutual relations as significant and underscored the need for parliamentary cooperation between the two countries.

Iran's deputy foreign minister elaborated on the recent inhuman acts of the Zionist regime in south Lebanon and denounced the silence of the West in the face of the Zionist atrocities criticizing the selective treatment of the upholders of human rights.

He added that the world must not watch the defenseless and innocent people of Lebanon being victimized on account of the internal problems of the Zionist regime.

The Czech and Iranian officials exchanged views on international and regional as well as Bosnian developments.

Czech Republic: Dailies on Czech-Polish Cooperation Talks

AU1704165196

[FBIS Report] Two Prague dailies publish on 16 April commentaries on relations between Poland and the Czech Republic following the talks between the foreign and defense ministers of the two countries. Prague LIDOVE NOVINY in Czech on 16 April carries on page 7 a 450-word commentary by Tomas Zahradnicek entitled "Czech-Polish Courting." According to the author, the two countries' "political rapprochement is gaining speed," and the ministerial meeting in Vyskov has been the pinnacle of these relations so far. The ministers, according to Zahradnicek, acknowledged the similarity in the situations of the two countries and the

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need "to reinforce this common position" because "our region holds identical views" on the key issues. "Close cooperation between two leading candidates for NATO membership will help Brussels in its decisionmaking," Zahradnicek says, because "one of the reasons for hesitation on the part of the alliance regarding the admission of new members has been concern over conflicts between them." The pathetic state of the armies of the two states is also a reason for intensifying cooperation, according to Zahradnicek. Cooperation in refurbishing the Army can save money. Czech Foreign Minister Zieleniec is quoted as saying that "the times require this intensive cooperation," and, according to Zahradnicek, it will continue to do so.

Prague MLADA FRONTA DNES in Czech on 16 April on page 12 carries a 450-word commentary by Josef Tucek on the new cooperation between the two countries, entitled "How To Find Oneself on the NATO Map." According to this author, for a small country like the Czech Republic, it is becoming ever more important to cooperate with others, and Poland certainly is a good candidate. While the Czech Republic kept itself aside from the other Central European countries, "Poland, as the largest Central European state, with a strategic geographic position, recognized military traditions, and a clearly pro-Atlantic policy, has become candidate number-one for NATO membership." Tucek further writes that "the declared joint approach to arms purchasing, whereby both countries could save money, could be used to determine the success of military cooperation with Poland." So far, however, they have only managed to trade unwanted aircraft, according to Tucek, and "to announce that a joint commission for evaluation of Air Force development would be formed at an undetermined date. That certainly is not the most convincing of beginnings."

Czech Republic: Klaus, Lux in Interparty Talks

LD1704163796 Prague Radiozurnal Radio Network in Czech 1300 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Vaclav Klaus, prime minister and chairman of the Civic Democratic Party [ODS] had talks in Kramar Villa shortly before 1400 today with Josef Lux, agriculture minister and chairman of the Christian-Democratic Union-Czechoslovak People's Party [KDU-CSL]. Ilona Dienstbierova reports:

[Dienstbierova] The two politicians denied any connection between their meeting and yesterday's vote in the Chamber of Deputies, in which some deputies from the ODS and the KDU-CSL turned down the meeting's proposed agenda. Josef Lux confirmed that chairmen and deputy chairmen of parliamentary clubs as well as the parliament speaker are involved in discussing this situation at the present time and that no fresh information about this meeting has become available so far.

Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus did not speak about any specific issue he and Lux discussed. He mentioned that the meeting concerned present and future cooperation between these two coalition parties.

Josef Lux addded that, even though there are certain differences between the two parties' policies, there are many issues they have in common. There should not therefore be any problems after the elections, not even during the drafting of the government policy statement.

The two politicians pledged to improve communication with each other in the run-up to the [June] elections.

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Slovakia: Ministry Official Views U.S. Bill on NATO

AU1704161396 Bratislava PRAVDA in Slovak 17 Apr 96 p 2

[Interview with Jozef Sestak, state secretary at the Slovak Foreign Ministry, by Leopold Moravcik; place and date not given: "It Is Only a Bill on NATO Expansion"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Moravcik] Reports appeared in our press that the U.S. Congress is preparing a bill on the expansion of NATO, according to which only three countries will be accepted in the first wave. Slovakia is not mentioned. Do you know any details about this?

[Sestak] The information that appeared in the press is dramatizing the situation and misleading at the same time because, in professional diplomacy, everything has its routine. We received information that the aforementioned, already the third, bill to enable the U.S. Administration to provide assistance to alliance-membership hopefuls is in the works. In the preceding three [as published], Slovakia was also mentioned. This year's bill, which the U.S. House of Representatives is preparing, mentions in its second part the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland as candidates, with the provision that the President may add other states to receive this assistance. The objective of the first part of the bill is to give a stimulus to the administration to energetically continue the activities leading towards the expansion of NATO. It is true that only the three aforementioned countries are referred to in the bill.

[Moravcik] Have you reacted to this format of the bill?

[Sestak] We have taken certain steps in an attempt to influence the process to stop us dropping out of the group of four. Congressman Benjamin Gilman, as chairman of the House Foreign Committee, sent a group of advisers to the four aforementioned states, and we explained our stands to them in a discussion that lasted several hours. We have information that they accepted many of our arguments.

I would like to observe that the aforementioned bill is only at the beginning of the adoption process. To pass as a law, it must accommodate those who hold different views. Moreover, the administration is against mentioning any specific countries in the law because, at this stage, it would complicate the process of NATO expansion.

[Moravcik] If Slovakia is mentioned in the preceding laws, is it not a certain signal of a change of the opinion of some congressmen?

[Sestak] It is a certain signal, but I would like repeat that it also reflects the process of the adoption of laws in Congress. To obtain the necessary support, the bill must be as uncontroversial as possible. If we also take into account the views of the U.S. State Department, I am convinced that the bill will not pass in the form in which it recently appeared before our public.

Slovakia: Meciar Discusses Completion of Nuclear Plant

AU1704171396 Bratislava PRAVDA in Slovak 17 Apr 96 pp 1-2

[Interview with Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar by Olga Prekopova; place and date not given: "We Expect the Participation of Western Firms Also in the Other Units"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Prekopova] According to expert estimates, the first unit of the Mochovce nuclear power plant (EMO) will be launched in July 1998, the second one in March 1999, and two more units are to be built continuously at an estimated cost of 35 billion korunas [Sk]. What does the term continuously mean in this instance?

[Meciar] The completion of Units 3 and 4 requires that the work be conducted concurrently with the construction of Units 1 and 2. Therefore Sk800 to 900 million of the total of Sk26 billion needed for the completion of the first two units will be concurrently used to complete the other two units. After the completion of the work on the first two units, the work teams will get an opportunity to take part in the construction of the third and fourth units of the EMO. Namely, if we transferred without any interruption to these parts of the complex, we could also speak about reducing the cost of the construction. It would also be a good solution with respect to Slovak power needs in the future, because in connection with the industrial recovery, for instance, the consumption of electric power increased in the Slovak Republic by 18.3 percent in the first quarter in comparison with the same period last year.

[Prekopova] Can one reckon with the EUCOM consortium, comprised of the renowned west European firms Framatom and Siemens, also for the construction of the remaining two units of the EMO?

[Meciar] We would be glad if all the firms, which signed the fundamental contracts for the first two units yesterday, would participate in the completion of the EMO until the final touches are done. Although Siemens, Framatom, or Electricite de France have a relatively small part in their completion, their participation is important from the technical point of view because the

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EUCOM consortium, for instance, is implementing the safety equipment for the power plant under construction.

[Prekopova] A unique international consortium of firms was formed in Mochovce that, according to you, has a chance to take part in the reconstruction or, as the case may be, construction of 44 nuclear power plants in Europe and Asia. Do you have power plants with reactors of the VVER [water-moderated water-cooled power reactor] 440-213 type in mind or others, too?

[Meciar] Nuclear power generation has stagnated in Europe for several years, because of the opposition of the Greens and others, and also because of the unfortunate Chernobyl experience. On the other hand, no definitive solutions have been found even during this stagnation. Several countries are facing the question of where to get energy. It is precisely the nuclear power plant that represents one possible source. While working on the preparation of this international consortium, we consulted numerous government officials and firms, and contemplated the chances of the consortium emerging in Mochovce on the world markets. We have also considered other alternatives but it seems that the symbiosis of information once available in the eastern nuclear power generation and now accessible also to the West—we refer to it as European today—can form such a strong grouping that it can determine the development throughout the world. There is the potential to build or reconstruct 40-44 power plants.

[Prekopova] The theses of the so-called atomic law adopted by the government do not include any passage on compensation to communities and localities in the nuclear plant buffer zone. How will this problem be solved?

[Meciar] What the communities from the safety zone say has nothing to do with the atomic law. They want a share of the power plant revenues in the form of a special levy. The revenues of some of them would increase this way but it has nothing to do with this item. To avoid any doubts regarding the observation of internationally valid norms and laws, the government adopted a statement on guarantees of liability for damages caused by the operation of the nuclear power facilities in the Slovak Republic. For the second year now, we have been withdrawing Sk2 billion from the state budget to cover the damages caused by a conceivable incident at a nuclear facility. So, as a contractual party, we are compatible with the principles of the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damages.

[Prekopova] When do you expect the adoption in the National Council of the Slovak Republic of the necessary law on peaceful use of nuclear power?

[Meciar] The atomic legislation exists here. It was assumed still from the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic. There is no legal vacuum. The government has done its duty in this respect, and the laws, which are to further improve the status quo, will be adopted in the National Council of the Slovak Republic before the end of the year. The Slovak Nuclear Monitoring Office is to process the final draft of the aforementioned so-called atomic law by the end of April.

Slovakia: France's Framatome Involved in Mochovce Plant

BR1804113796 Paris LES ECHOS in French 17 Apr 96 p 13

[Article by Jean-Francois Polo: "Framatome Involved in Completion of Slovak Mochovce Plant"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Bratislava—The agreement signed yesterday in Bratislava for the completion of two units at the Mochovce power plant reflects the new balance that is currently emerging in terms of East-West partnerships in the nuclear domain. The West Europeans, who had devised an ambitious plan under the auspices of Electricite de France [EDF] and Bayernwerk, with funding from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and Euratom, have since had to scrap their plans once and for all. Their ambitions conflicted with Slovak national sensitivities and the backfire lit by the Russians who were keen to retain their hold on the nuclear power facilities of the former Soviet satellite. [passage omitted]

However, while the West may be down it is certainly not out. Framatome, in association with Siemens, has actually fought its corner quite well. The French-German tandem will be involved in the project to the tune of around 500 million French francs [Fr], Fr220 million of which will be provided by Jean-Claude Leny's Framatome group. The contract is for the supply of engineering and equipment surveys for reactor control and instrumentation, accident prevention, and protection from radiation and fire. Framatome CEO Dominique Degaut stressed: "This agreement is important because it is a first on the East European market and for a Soviet-built power station."

Prospects for Other Contracts

For its part, EDF, which said it was prepared to invest Fr820 million in the initial contract that was rejected by Bratislava, has not come away completely empty-handed. The French state electrical utility has signed

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an aid contract with the Slovak prime contractor and also expects to conclude an aid agreement for plant operation. These deals are worth a total of Fr100 million. [passage omitted]

The West has its fingers crossed that the deal set up in Slovakia will now serve as a reference for other Eastern European states. Framatome, which this year concluded an agreement for the installation of a spent fuel storage site in Armenia, thus has its eye on bringing units 5 and 6 of the Bulgarian Kozloduy plant up to scratch and, in association with Siemens, of completing the Ukrainian reactors of Rovno 4 and Khmelnitski.

Slovakia: 'Secret' Witnesses Suggest Kovac Kidnapping Staged

AU1604183296 Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA in Slovak 16 Apr 96 p 2

[Article by Eva Stahlova: "According to Major Ciz, Interrogation of Three Secret Witnesses Confirms Version of Simulated Kidnapping"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Bratislava—Friday's [12 April] STV [Slovak Television] news provided information on new facts in the case of Michal Kovac Jr.'s abduction abroad, which Slovak Television managed to obtain "from well-informed sources close to the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic."

According to this information, two female secret witnesses, both residents of Svaty Jur, who were questioned several months ago, saw Michal Kovac Jr. on the morning of 31 August 1995 "in circumstances that testify to a simulated kidnapping." Major Jozef Ciz, the investigator in the case, told yesterday's STV news program "Today" that as early as February, the Slovak Police Corps investigator interrogated the two secret witnesses who cited circumstances that were different than those documented in the testimony of the damaged party, Michal Kovac Jr. Another secret witness who was questioned one month later confirmed the circumstances cited by those two female secret witnesses. Major Ciz said that so far they have received from Austrian authorities only some materials, "particularly interrogations of the damaged party Kovac."

The state bodies of the Slovak Republic do not have any other materials, despite the fact that, as Major Ciz emphasized, Ladislav Pittner, chairman of the so-called independent investigating commission, together with other members of that commission, are already studying and analyzing parts of the Austrian authorities' investigation file.

Slovakia: Kovac Jr Objects to Kidnapping Investigator

AU1804133896 Bratislava SME in Slovak 17 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by "pt": "According to Michal Kovac Jr, Investigator J. Ciz Joined the Disinformation Campaign"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Bratislava—In an interview for SME, Michal Kovac Jr. labeled the appearance of investigator J. Ciz in the main news program of Slovak Television [STV] on Monday, 15 April, as "the investigator's becoming involved in the disinformation campaign conducted by STV against my person." He added that he would have "no choice but to make use of all legal means against the so-called secret witnesses and sue them for false testimony." J. Ciz told STV: "As early as February 1996, two female witnesses were questioned by the investigator as secret witnesses, who cited circumstances different from those documented in the testimony of the damaged party Kovac. One month later, another secret witness was questioned who confirmed the circumstances cited by the two female secret witnesses."

The investigator of the kidnapping of the president's son was reacting to information reported by STV a few days earlier on the interrogation of two female secret witnesses who had allegedly confirmed the version of the so-called simulated kidnapping. Furthermore, J. Ciz "paraphrased" the official wording of the verdict of the Upper Provincial Court in Vienna, which ruled that the extradition of Michal Kovac Jr. to Germany would be inadmissible. Ciz said: "There is talk in the verdict, for example, about an anonymous caller who, on 31 August 1995 at 1000 hours, announced to the customs office in Kittsee that a person, for whom an arrest warrant had been issued in Austria, would be crossing the border to the Republic of Austria. This was at 1000. However, only at 1055 did the damaged party Kovac, according to his own testimony, telephone from his own house that he was about to leave it. Until then no one knew, in fact, that he would be leaving his house. This raises the question of which persons knew this and how they could call Kittsee as early as 10 o'clock." Responding to this, Michal Kovac told SME: "In my opinion, the kidnappers strove in this way to make the Austrian Border Police focus attention on the official border crossings, which freed the so-called green border for them. Everything happening with regard to the investigation of my kidnapping is the pinnacle of ruthlessness. It is as though this country was living in a bad dream. Those who committed the crime, in my opinion, are being covered by state power while the damaged party, against whom brute force had been

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used, is being branded in the public as a liar, with the assistance of STV and the indirect assistance of the investigator."

[Bratislava PRACA in Slovak on 18 April on page 2 carries a 400-word report by Ivan Cerdejev on a statement issued by Michal Kovac Jr. in response to the "false and misleading testimonies" cited by STV. The president's son calls it "appalling" that he, as the victim, must prove that a criminal act had been committed against him and wonders "on what the investigator is working, in fact—on investigating the kidnapping or on documenting the legend about the so-called simulated kidnapping being foisted upon him by the true kidnappers"? Kovac considers it "startling" that "STV, within the framework of a disinformation campaign, is trying to cast doubt on the very course of investigation in Austria and publicly calls in question the decision of an independent judicial body of another state." In conclusion, Michal Kovac Jr. calls on STV and investigator Major Ciz "not to let themselves been drawn into dirty, unlawful practices, aimed at turning the victim of a criminal act into the kidnapper at all costs and the true kidnappers into the victim."]

Slovakia: Austrian Ruling on Extradition of Kovac Jr

AU1804123996 Bratislava SME in Slovak 17 Apr 96 p 4

[Excerpts from the verdict of the Upper Provincial Court in Vienna dated 20 February ruling against extraditing Michal Kovac Jr. to Bavaria.: "By Extraditing Michal Kovac Jr, Austria Would Violate Law"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The SME editorial office has obtained the unauthorized text of the ruling of the Upper Provincial Court in Vienna on 20 February 1996 rejecting the extradition of Michal Kovac, Jr. to Germany. We have selected the most important passages from the text.

During the public hearing (...) requested by Michal Kovac, Jr., the petitioner denied the grounds given to the court regarding the prosecution of his person. He requested that the application for extradition be rejected because he had been brought to the Republic of Austria in violation of international law by the use of force by (Slovak Republic) "security officials" for the purpose of compromising his father, the president of the Slovak state.

Before examining the case of a criminal offense, it was necessary to investigate the alleged violation of international law, whereby the Upper Provincial Court was guided by the following considerations: In 1958, the Republic of Austria joined the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms (hereinafter Convention—ed. note). (...) The Slovak Republic is also a signatory state. The preamble to the Convention refers to the "Universal Declaration on Human Rights" adopted by the UN General Assembly on 10 December 1948, whereby the Republic of Austria, together with other West European states, expressed their solidarity by assuming "collective guarantees" of "certain rights professed in the Universal Declaration." The signatory states assumed (...) the obligation to work actively to secure the guaranteed rights. "The right to liberty," according to Article 5 of the Convention, is guaranteed so that no one may be deprived of it heedlessly (in violation of law). According to Article 5, Paragraph 4 of the Convention, in order to be lawful the detention must be in violation of neither the domestic law, nor the general principles contained in the Convention(...).

While respecting the "principle of international coresponsibility," the court found it necessary in the matter of the action concerning the extradition to examine all the reported circumstances, regarding which the president of the Slovak Republic was also heard: (...) The claims of Michal Kovac, Jr. that his abduction by force to the Republic of Austria was carried out by Slovak intelligence agents and that the reasons behind it are to be found in domestic political disputes were supported by the evidence of a member of the Slovak Information Service, and by the president of the Slovak Republic, who testified as witnesses. Contrary to international custom, no protest has been filed by the authorities against the arrest and extradition proceedings that followed the violent abduction of Slovak citizen Michal Kovac, Jr. from the sovereign territory of his home state to the Republic of Austria, and his immediate return has not been requested either, despite the fact that the Slovak Government must have been informed about the facts of the case.

Attention must be drawn to the fact that, according to Article 23, Paragraph 4 of the Slovak Constitution, a Slovak citizen may be neither forced to leave his home state, nor deported or extradited to another state. This leads to the reasonable suspicion that Michal Kovac, Jr. was deprived his liberty and conveyed to the Republic of Austria by violent means, and with the full knowledge of the Slovak authorities, and this through its subordinated organization/institution, or, as the case may be, by persons working for them, to facilitate in this manner his extradition to Germany (...).

For this reason, by extraditing Michal Kovac, Jr., who was abducted by force and in violation of Article 5 to Austria, the Republic of Austria would de facto contribute to his de jure inadmissible (concealed) extradi-

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tion from his home state to Germany, and would thereby become an accessory to the state that disregarded the right to liberty guaranteed by the Convention. Moreover, by interpretation of the term culprit as used in the Austrian Penal Code, it is necessary to take into consideration that "not only the immediate culprit is liable for the criminal offense... but anyone ... who ... assisted in committing the criminal offense."

Slovakia: HZDS Said To Seek 'Influence' in Unions

AU1804094396 Bratislava PRAVDA in Slovak 17 Apr 96 p 2

[Article by "(va)": "The HZDS Wants Influence in the Unions"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Bratislava—According to information from the Confederation of Trades Unions [KOZ], the first meeting was held in Topolcany on 12 April between the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia's [HZDS] District Board and select union functionaries from the given district. This testifies to a certain course of action by the HZDS, via which it would like to secure political influence in the unions. This statement was made yesterday by KOZ Vice President Marian Lacko at a news conference devoted to the meeting between the KOZ board and assembly. According to him, Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar also said at the HZDS assembly in Zvolen that the movement was not interested originally in entering into union politics because it wants strong unions in Slovakia. In the meantime, however, the Christian Trades Unions were established. They are small, but the Christian Democratic Movement has political influence through them. Similarly, the Party of the Democratic Left, apparently, has an influence on the unions through certain union officials. Therefore, based on this development, the HZDS must reassess its course of action and secure political influence in the unions. Marian Lacko emphasized that he personally does not consider such a policy to be normal, no matter which party it comes from. Yesterday's meeting between the KOZ board and assembly was devoted to preparations for the 3d KOZ Congress, which will be held on 11 and 12 October 1996.

Slovakia: HZDS 'Propagandists' Stance on 'Westerners'

AU1704160396 Bratislava PRAVDA in Slovak 17 Apr 96 p 4

[Commentary by Vladimir Jancura: "The West Supposedly Does Not Want Us, but Do We Want the West?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Today, even some politicians and propagandists of the ruling movement [Movement for a Democratic Slovakia, HZDS] publicly admit that "the West does not want us." In other words, its representatives more and more often "forget" to mention Slovakia when listing countries that will enlarge NATO and the EU in the near future. However, this sounds too diplomatic, and the columnist of our progovernment daily prefers to say things more directly. This is why he put it in plain Slovak yesterday: "We are disobedient, which the West dislikes." Thereby, he simultaneously challenged what has, until now, been the mainstream theory among the ideologists of the government camp, namely that we have fallen into disgrace with the Westerners because our own opposition intentionally distorts the domestic political situation in Slovakia. This is no longer the case! Everything suggests that the West's concern has been aroused, first and foremost, by "our longing for state and, in particular, economic independence and the natural right to our own political assessment of the present world." This is at least what the daily SLOVENSKA REPUBLIKA claims in its latest issue. On what does it base its argument? On the analyses of Miloslav Dolejsi, the Czech forecaster of history-making conspiracies (who is a classic today!), who wrote some time ago that the West wants to form out of Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary "one state—a confederation" to serve as its buffer zone in the event—and n hold your breath—of a conflict between China and Russia. Well, Slovakia refused to follow this scenario and now it must pay dearly for it....

But do not think that such thinking represents a unique phenomenon in present-day Slovak journalism. In [the weekly] ZMENA, for a change, another author—and not just any author but [HZDS Deputy] Roman Hofbauer himself—is making fun of high-level NATO and EU representatives' visits to Slovakia: "They all advise us as though we were dummies, tutor us as though we were idiots, educate us as though we were illiterate, judge us like habitual offenders, chide us like delinquents, give us assignments as though we were retarded, and intimidate and threaten us like criminals."

Daring, is it not? But this is not everything. Hofbauer spares no irony on the "humble little Slovaks" either. Judge for yourselves: "The polite and hospitable, modest and amiable Slovak host nation, always with tears in its eyes, bids farewell to all these high-born, mighty, distinguished, and even more distinguished visitors, and we traditionally comfort ourselves that, while they bawled us out, it could have been worse and, in the end, we are actually glad and grateful for all the abuses and spits...."

And so forth. And the like. As though a different, a normal, relationship were not possible. A relationship without kowtowing—to the West or to the East—but also without false pride, marked by an inferiority

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complex, in relation to this or that foreign power. It needs to be said, however, that, in our case, acting as though we were the center of the world is very comical. Especially when we present this stand as our independent political assessment of the present world!

Can one be surprised when the West perceives us as ridiculously backward or, at the very least, as difficult to decipher?

Slovakia: Minister Discusses Progress in Privatization

AU1604180696 Bratislava PRAVDA in Slovak 13 Apr 96 pp 1, 4

["Exclusive" interview with Privatization Minister Peter Bisak by Jan Puchovsky; place and date not given: "Privatization Is Not Yet Over"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Puchovsky] At the time of accelerated privatization, the sector of which you are the minister is in fact intensively working on a reason for terminating its own work. Does the staff of your department also perceive it like this?

[Bisak] At first sight, it may actually look like this. The second wave of privatization is to end on 30 June this year, and this gives rise to the question of what comes next. It is necessary to realize, however, that a lot of work awaits our sector even after this deadline. Privatization of a part of the state property in the agricultural sector comes to mind, for instance, or privatization of biological service enterprises, water works, and sewage works. Similarly, approximately 150 health care facilities are to be privatized, and the same applies to the transport, post, and telecommunications sector, where the Slovak Bus Transport and many institutions or operations that are a part of our railroad transport are to be privatized. Moreover, one cannot forget the property linked to Article 2 of the Law on Strategic Enterprises, where privatization will be a question of an individual approach, and the time schedule of which cannot be specified at this time. In addition, our sector has more than 800 unsettled restitution claims and 92 unresolved court actions from the small-scale privatization. A part of the work of this sector is connected to the liquidation of state enterprises, of which there are 400. In this context, we have prepared a special decree, and we are also working on a decree concerning the administration of property that is in a state of legal vacuum. Last but not least, we are also working on the privatization activities in neighboring countries by some of our enterprises. So there is no shortage of work in our sector, and it seems to remain so also in the future.

[Puchovsky] So, the bell announcing the actual end of privatization and the conclusion of the work of your sector will not sound even in the middle of this year?

[Bisak] There certainly will be enough work for approximately two years. A major part is work of very specific character. It requires specific qualifications, which the experts of our ministry have. How this process will be institutionalized, or whether it will take place under the umbrella of our sector or another one, that all is just a secondary problem on the level of political decision-making.

[Puchovsky] Would you not agree that the current pace of privatization and the dominant form of adopted decisions are also of political character?

[Bisak] The pace of privatization must be considered, above all, an economic task. The situation in most of our state enterprises simply requires rapid privatization. The overall recovery of our economy depends on it. One of the great question marks in the issue of decisions is, however, how the new owner will perform in his new role. To choose the best of the large number of interested parties is a very demanding task, and the result is not necessarily guaranteed beforehand. It is only verified by the economic practice over the next few years. Some of the new owners may not pass the test of time, and will have to yield to others. So, a change of the ownership relations is not ruled out. At the same time, I would not say that only supporters of the government coalition are privatizing. Namely, when an enterprise is being privatized, various groups emerge from different parts of the political spectrum, which lobby to achieve their goal. Our task is not to examine the political affiliation but to choose the future businessman best able to deal with the needs of the economic recovery or restructuring of the given enterprise.

[Puchovsky] Could you compare the volume of the property privatized under the government of Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar with that privatized under the government of the present opposition?

[Bisak] During the existence of the former government, i.e., the present opposition, from 16 March to 30 November 1994, decisions were made regarding privatization of 136 items with property totaling 13.917 billion korunas [Sk], of which 23 were direct sales of property worth Sk2.29 billion, and nine sales worth Sk1.639 billion. During the government of Vladimir Meciar, with the exception of the aforementioned period, decisions were made regarding 679 items with the volume of property amounting to Sk93.951 billion, of which 255 were direct sales of property worth Sk22.85 billion and 101 sales of shares worth Sk19.892 billion. One can say in general that the dynamics of the process improved

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during this period, particularly since April, when the government approved the basic document on the future progress of privatization.

[Puchovsky] During this period, the idea was also adopted of such privatization that would give rise to a strong domestic business stratum. This cannot be popular abroad.

[Bisak] The government is well aware of this responsibility. No similar solution has been accepted in any of the neighboring countries. We took as our point of departure that if this is the historical time of constituting new ownership relations, it is necessary to give a certain advantage to the domestic business stratum handicapped by the dearth of capital, and which could not have a chance in an open competition with abroad. Foreign capital will not miss its chance. It will be given this chance in the next period, when it will have the opportunity to apply itself in a thusly created enterprise environment. Capital knows no borders, and the real interest will be demonstrated by cooperating with the Slovak owners, which is evidenced by foreign capital rising in Slovakia by more than 30 percent in 1995 in comparison with 1994.

[Puchovsky] You represent a political party in the government, which—among other things—had in its program the implementation of employee shares. Do you feel a debt toward them?

[Bisak] The preceding government did not at all deal with employee participation in privatization. The coalition partners enshrined it in their election programs and transferred it also into the government policy statement. I believe we have fulfilled this task. The government approved the principles of employee participation in the privatization process. These principles then facilitated a certain preference, with other conditions being equal, for the acquisition of an enterprise—not binding, of course—by the employee association. If the employee association did not become the new owner of the enterprise, and it is advantageous to implement the participation of the employees in privatization of that enterprise, the new owner is obliged by law to provide some of the property, i.e. shares, to the employees. It is understandable, however, that it is not possible to solve privatization everywhere by the participation of employees in its process.

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Hungary: Defense Minister, U.S. General Discuss IFOR

LD1704175696 Budapest Duna TV in Hungarian 1600 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Defense Minister Gyorgy Keleti today received in his office General Joseph Ralston, first deputy to the chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff [title as heard].

[Unidentified reporter] As Gyorgy Keleti said after the meeting, Hungary's participation in the Implementation Force [IFOR] can help the country's accession to NATO. We are also using this role to achieve results in bilateral relations, too.

[Begin Keleti recording] We are receiving a lot of support from the U.S. Army in modernizing and restructuring the Hungarian Army, and in training our young and leading officers. All this contributes to the opportunity for the Hungarian Republic to apply for NATO membership with a chance of acceptance. [end recording]

[Reporter] The general stressed that Hungary has already taken significant steps to join NATO. Regarding the Bosnian IFOR operation, he said that according to the decision of the U.S. Congress, U.S. soldiers will have to leave by the end of the year; however, the timetable for withdrawal is not yet complete.

Hungary: Ministry Reduces Military Service to 9 Months

LD1704212996 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 1900 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Military service in Hungary will be reduced from one year to nine months. Senior Defense Ministry officials have decided that shorter service time is sufficient for most troops, and where longer training is required professional soldiers should be employed. At the moment it is not known when the reduction of the military service will begin, only that this year new conscripts will still enter a one-year service.

Hungary: Civil-Military Relations Discussed

96CH0085A Budapest NEPSZABADSAG in Hungarian 27 Mar 96 p 7

[Article by Veronika R. Hahn: "Who Guards the Guardians? Civilian Control Over the Military Is One of the Pillars of Democracy"]

[FBIS Translated Text] *"In Hungary the topic of civilian control over the military has become part of public consciousness only in recent years, mainly as one of the conditions for joining NATO; nevertheless, every political system has, for a long time, been confronted with the task of organizing the relationship between the armed forces and the political power," Reka Szemerkenyi, 29, told NEPSZABADSAG. She works for the influential London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies—IISS—under a one-year contract.*

The young and fragile English and French major philosophy student-turned strategic researcher became attracted to security issues while working in the field of international relations. She has been working in Budapest at the Ministry of Defense since 1990; during this time she became interested in the issue of civilian control. As a Fulbright scholar she had already dealt with security policy issues in the United States before. She conveyed a sense of her work as follows: compatibility, a common peacemaking practice in the framework of a partnership in peace is a specialized military issue, but whether being a partner in peace advances Hungary toward a declared security policy goal, i.e., toward NATO membership, or how such a goal can be attained falls primarily within the decisionmaking scope of civilian political direction.

Female strategic researchers are no rarity in the U.S., thus, adapting herself was not too difficult. As of recent, female associates have also appeared in the London-based IISS. She has more difficulty maintaining relations with East and Central European armies and defense ministries. Since she is a civilian, a woman, and a young person, these organizations are less capable of placing her, and this causes "multiple disadvantages." She had to harden herself, a quality that carried her over initial encounters.

In this regard it helped that in the U.S. they took her to several military bases where she was able to test many things, load a howitzer, fire a machine gun, select a target in an advanced unit, issue a command to fire, drive a tank in a simulator, live in a military tent in desert training centers.... Thus, she acquired very much practical experience, and by conversing at length with soldiers, she was able to gain insight to issues of concern to the U.S. Army, such as defense budget reductions and the situation of homosexual soldiers and women in the army.

Since Juvenal

Reka Szemerkenyi delved into military exercises with joy, even though she has no militant inclinations whatsoever; to the contrary: she is convinced that democratic direction is capable of appropriately restraining the armed forces needed to maintain the security of every country.

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At issue is an ancient problem, or already defined by Juvenal in the First Century: "who guards the guardians," i.e., the mutual relationship between the political power and the armed forces. Fear of maintaining a permanent army has also been a subject of consideration by the founding fathers of the United States. Among charges leveled against British King George III, the Declaration of Independence made separate mention of excesses by British regular army units against the populace. To ameliorate these concerns, they developed civilian control over the army, to an extent unprecedented in those days.

In Hungary the issue of civilian control was increasingly placed on the agenda beginning in 1990, and became articulated in the post-Cold War European perspective, Reka Szemerkenyi said. Defense issues in general had been taboos earlier; therefore, after 1990 the issue might have appeared as a matter of alternatives: either civilians or experts would work in the Ministry of Defense. The essence of this matter is not what they argued for a while in the U.S., for example, namely, that civilian leadership could "manage" the army better, but instead, that the army implements concepts developed by a democratically elected civilian leadership. The main subject of Szemerkenyi's work now being prepared is not the civilian control of the military, but in a broader sense, the situation of civilian-military relations in Central Europe.

In conjunction with joining NATO, civilian control became a goal to be attained, which in turn required legal and constitutional provisions, and also had financial implications. Civilian control must be realized in a way that it becomes inseparable from both organizational efficiency and military security. To accomplish this, the civilians must acquire the expertise of soldiers, and soldiers must acquire the expertise of civilians, who are capable of conveying defense needs to parliament and to the electorate in a credible manner.

Within the region, Hungary is handling the civilian-military situation with an above average flexibility, according to Reka Szemerkenyi. The Horn government started out by exchanging the Ministry staff in a virtually demonstrative manner; Horn appointed as head of the Ministry a leader with a questionable civilian background, and persons with possible civilian backgrounds were given military ranks on short notice. This appeared to be a rarely used method to resolve this issue within the region. As closer relations evolved between the Ministry's leadership and the NATO member countries however, the situation continuously reversed itself. Within a short period of time, several officers retired, but continued to work in the Ministry as civilians. Thus, suddenly, the number of civilians increased by several tenth of one percentage point. This greatly improved the related statistics, Szemerkenyi added.

NATO Examples

True, the 16 member countries of NATO interpret and resolve civilian direction of the military in a great variety of ways, and even though everyone agrees with the basic principle, it is not clear how one can measure the extent to which this concept is being implemented, the greater or lesser extent of the apparent existence of civilian control in individual countries. This is why not too long ago in Washington they began to clarify the general principles, the approach, and the attitude by which to view these things.

IISS researchers hail from a number of countries. "Just how uniformly do these researchers judge issues related to the expansion of NATO in East-Central Europe," I asked Reka Szemerkenyi, who said that even in a general sense, one finds differences of opinion between former sovietologists and the experts from the new East-Central Europe. The former frequently refer to reactions by Russia. Some researchers at the Institute, however, had worked in Washington when the partnership of peace came about; having brought American conceptions with them, they stress that the purpose of the partnership of peace was to prepare for the long-range expansion of NATO. The problem is complicated, because the political will is hard to pinpoint even in a single country, but regarding NATO, the decision must be made in 16 parliaments of 16 countries.

French Shuffle

One frequently hears that 1996 is the year of "great events" insofar as the expansion of NATO is concerned, because it is necessary to wait for the results of first the Russian, and second the U.S. presidential elections. This is only partly true, Reka Szemerkenyi said. Recent steps taken by the French—to rejoin NATO's military integration—could have serious consequences from the organization's point of view. It is highly probable that, at the NATO conference in Rome to be held in June, discussions will center around ways in which France could return to the NATO command system. At the end of the year, consistent with the spirit of the December 1995 NATO declaration, they will examine what progress was made regarding partnership of peace. Many in the Institute feel that a new or a newly elected U.S. president could receive a huge boost if he would make a substantive announcement regarding more specific negotiations in 1997 concerning the expansion of NATO.

London, March 1996

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Hungary: Bankruptcy Statistics for 1995 Analyzed

96CH0054B Budapest FIGYELO in Hungarian 25 Jan 96 p 24

[Article by Tamas Kiss: "Liquidation Is No Obstacle"]

[FBIS Translated Text] *The new year immediately began with a bankruptcy: a petition in bankruptcy was filed against Delker Rt. barely a week ago. Relatively few—just 26—bankruptcy cases were initiated last year. Although there actually is no shortage of failing firms, everybody is avoiding real bankruptcy. Anyone with a bit of "business" sense prefers to wait until the very end and then be placed in liquidation. By when, of course, the firm is completely bare.*

One also has to know how to lose. Liquidation, it seems, is one of the most profitable lines of business. Last year on average, two bankruptcy proceedings were initiated every month. This might even be cause for optimism, if statistics were reflecting the actual situation. In fact, a profusion of forced creditors and thousands of insolvent firms are littering the economic landscape. The explanation behind the all-quiet-on-the-bankruptcy-front is that, in most cases, bankruptcy proceedings would cause the greatest loss to indebted firms. Not to mention the fact that liquidation harbors opportunities—undoubtedly dishonest ones—which place the debtor in the more advantageous situation. The saying that it is better to be a debtor than a creditor appears to be confirmed.

Speed is of the essence. The sooner the creditor demands his money, the more likely he is to get it back. One way of doing this is to file a petition for liquidation against the debtor firm, says Sandor Piskolti, an attorney who is a prominent expert in this field. In such cases the court notifies the debtor and orders him to file a written answer to the petition within eight days, stating whether or not he acknowledges the debt. Most often the prepared debtor responds with a petition for an extension of the time limit for filing his answer, and he also notes that he is entering into negotiations with the creditor for a settlement. The court almost always grants an extension. But it would not matter much if the court happened to reject the petition for an extension: it is common knowledge that the courts are overburdened, and several months would have elapsed by the time the judge got around to rejecting the petition. During this time the debtor might agree with the creditor on a settlement. The debtor has to reach a settlement with only one creditor and is thus able to avoid the scandal of liquidation. Although the creditor usually gets back only a part of what he was owed, he, too, comes off well—in the case of liquidation proceedings, he would not get back even that much, because of the order of satisfying claims. The court, too, comes off as a winner: the settlement enables the court to close the case. However, Sandor Piskolti notes, this successful escape also has its losers—namely, the other creditors. By being left behind at the start, they end up in a substantially worse situation.

Receding Wave of Bankruptcies

Year	Number of Bankruptcies	
	Initiated	Completed
1992	2,294	1,041
1993	780	1,341
1994	73	394
1995	28	140

Source: Central Statistical Office

Filing a notice of winding up his affairs offers the debtor an even less risky escape route. By law, such a notice may be filed with the court only by a debtor acting in good faith, who believes he will be able to satisfy the claims of all his creditors in full. Of course, his assets are not enough to cover all the claims, but it is very difficult to question his good faith. The debtor begins to skim off the cream as soon as the notice has been filed. He has a stranglehold on his creditors and pays the ones he chooses. Among the creditors in the queue, only the ones willing to settle with the creditor for much less than what he owes can hope to recover anything. Having easily passed on his insolvent firm's remaining assets, the debtor regretfully notifies the court that he had misjudged the situation and there still were unsatisfied creditors left. Liquidation follows at this point. But it brings only trouble and expense for everyone, because by then there is not even a penny left in the firm.

This solution is so smooth that it is already suspect. Yet there is no remedy against it. For the Supreme Court, in a precedent-setting case, has sealed the creditors' fate. The court ruled that, while a final settlement was pending, a petition for liquidation could not be granted against a debtor who had filed a notice of winding up his affairs. Thus, the circle has closed.

But many debtors, regarding even a final settlement as too much bother, choose the most simple solution possible, although it is not risk-free. They wait until the creditors file a petition for liquidation, and then they simply disappear. According to Sandor Piskolti,

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this has become so common that it is a practically insoluble problem. For liquidation proceedings can be initiated only when the bankruptcy adjudication order has become final. And to become final, the order has to be served on the debtor. Thus, all the debtor has to do is to move to an unknown address. By now, regrettably, this method can be termed standard practice. There is one thing the court can do in such cases: call on the creditors to request the appointment of a guardian for serving the order, a further expense of a couple thousand forints for the weary creditor. The court usually appoints a law firm to act as guardian, and it has to find the hiding debtor. But law firms are not best qualified to carry out this task.

If by some miracle the debtor nevertheless turns up after several months or years, the adjudication order can be served on him, it becomes final, and liquidation may proceed. In most cases, however, the manhunt starts anew after the liquidator's appointment, because the debtor has again disappeared. Months or years go by once again. And when liquidation could finally start, every attempt is doomed to failure: the firm's owner himself has already stripped the firm of every asset. There is nothing to be done, because the liquidator is able to avoid only the contracts concluded within 12 months prior to the commencement of liquidation. In such cases the debtor usually could also be charged with some economic or other crime. But that, Sandor Piskolti admits, would hardly solve the forced creditors' problems. If the liquidator filed a complaint against the debtor, the police investigating the complaint would seize all the documents in the liquidator's possession, killing any hope of ever being able to successfully complete the liquidation. It seems impossible to avoid all the pitfalls. The tricked suppliers become forced creditors who, as a rule, never get paid.

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B-H: First Joint Military Commission Meeting Held in Doboj

AU1704204696 Sarajevo VECERNJE NOVINE (European edition) in Serbo-Croatian 17 Apr 96 p 9

[Report by O. Delic: "Promising First Meeting"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A meeting of the joint military commission at the level of the Swedish Battalion was held in the village of Svijetlic near Doboj. In the name of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army, the meeting was attended by the representatives of the 22d and 35d Division of the land forces, while the Serbian entity was represented by a delegation of the Operative Group 9 Doboj. The journalists were briefed on the contents of the talks by Lieutenant Palmberg, deputy commander of the Swedish Battalion of the Implementation Force [IFOR].

"This first meeting was of an informative nature and proved that the sides can negotiate and solve problems that exist in this country. Both sides supported the continuation of such meetings. In seven days' time, they will discuss mines and the clearance of mine fields, which represent a great problem for us," Lt. Palmberg said, emphasizing that he was satisfied with the atmosphere that prevailed at this meeting. He supported this claim by saying that not only military matters but mundane matters and even sports were also discussed.

B-H: Commentary Considers Foreign Presence, Influence

LD1404103296 Sarajevo Televizija Bosne i Hercegovine in Serbo-Croatian 2000 GMT 14 Apr 96

["Saturday commentary"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Things remain today as they were before: no agreement has been implemented or operation carried out in this country without the presence of at least one foreign representative, controller, or mentor, in addition to representatives of local interested parties.

Who is really running this country? Do we need to have any doubts about the colonial status or the protectorate over this country? Is this how things should be? The commentator of the daily OSLOBODJENJE, Vlastimir Mijovic, looks for an answer:

[Mijovic] Bosnia-Herzegovina has never had so many governments, leaderships, and various administrators. Still, one cannot say that it is administering itself. Moreover, the presence and competences of IFOR [Implementation Force], Carl Bildt, Koschnick, and Cassado, show that Bosnia-Herzegovina is under a kind of international patronage.

There are essential dilemmas only concerning the term, which could describe most precisely the character of the international mission in our country. The mission incorporates elements of protectorate, occupation, political patronage, and direct foreign administration.

IFOR is the most visible and so far the busiest presence. On the military level, it has pushed aside dómestic armies and reduced their importance virtually to a minimum.

The foreign army has not come by its own will—it was invited to help. Its presence is masked by a corresponding domestic agreement, primarily the Dayton and Paris agreements.

Things are almost clear with Carl Bildt, too. In an administratively divided country, he is the only one who has the supraentity, which is to say, republican, authority. He is a kind of coercive administrator of the company that fell apart into its departments. The leaderships of entities [Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation and Serb Republic] agree with such a role of his. Bildt has been voluntarily given certain rights which would normally belong to local leaderships.

The political and administrative part of the Bosnia-Herzegovina state sovereignty has also been transferred to the European Union and the White House. On the surface, their role is that of an arbitrator. It is, however, clear that they have a dominant influence on the creation of the constitutional and administrative order in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The economic sphere is the most obvious one—without foreign funds and investments, Bosnia-Herzegovina would remain only a sizeable ruin. But those giving the money naturally wish to influence how it is spent. In other words, we shall have to follow the imported recipe, even dictate. For instance, the World Bank is already imposing certain criteria which we would prefer to avoid. But we shall have to honor them because we cannot do anything else. Otherwise we would have found ourselves expelled from the global economic circle.

It seems that we could soon get the so-called Bildt's television. This would close the circle—the foreigners would inform us on what is happening here.

The state sovereignty of Bosnia-Herzegovina is obviously dented. Bosnia resembles a house without the host. But there is an important difference: this is not an enforced, but voluntary giving up of a part of the state sovereignty. It is believed that this would bear more fruit

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than it will do harm. After all, this people has longed for a kind of foreign patronage for a long time, throughout the aggression and war. It is now becoming our reality.

However, our reality are also justified fears that the foreign army and foreign political-economic administration could leave some ugly scars. A few days ago, Sarajevo citizens protested against the insolence of IFOR soldiers. Prime Minister Muratovic has reacted angrily to Carl Bildt's arrogance and willfulness. In all this we felt that we were not fully masters of our destiny.

It is doubtless that we shall have to pay this price for peace, because there would have been no peace without foreign military, political, and economic presence. We are all aware of this.

It is up to us to make this price more reasonable, to sacrifice for such a peace only a bearable part of our nation and our state sovereignty.

B-H: IFOR Seizes Serb Gun; EU To Send Mine Detectors

AU1704191296 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1700 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Canadian soldiers from the IFOR [Implementation Force] multinational brigade have confiscated a 20-mm gun belonging to the Serb entity's army, some 10-km southeast of Prijedor, because it was in the prohibited area, stated Major Simon Haselock, IFOR spokesman in Sarajevo.

The 20-mm gun was confiscated because it was not in the place it was supposed to be, Haselock explained. Haselock said that IFOR units have recently been busy registering all the locations envisaged for military units and artillery.

Another consignment of mine detectors, necessary for clearing mines in Bosnia-Herzegovina, is expected to arrive in Split on 22 April. The detectors are being donated by the European Union. This was stated at IFOR's news conference in Sarajevo. IFOR's Sarajevo spokesman, Maj. Simon Haselock, did not say how much equipment is going to arrive in Split, but did say that the consignment will be distributed to all sides through IFOR's multinational divisions in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

According to official information, the previous EU consignments that IFOR had already distributed contained about 300 mine detectors. It is thought that there are about 3 million mines in Bosnia-Herzegovina at present.

B-H: Serb Police Chief: IFOR Exceeding Its Mandate

AU1704142296 Belgrade NASA BORBA in Serbo-Croatian 15 Apr 96 p 9

[Interview with Milenko Karisik, "chief of police of the Serb Republic," by Dragoljub Petrovic; place and date not given: "IFOR Is Interfering in Our Civilian Affairs"]

[FBIS Translated Text] "The security situation in the Serb Republic is satisfying, and we are countering criminal activities successfully. The people seem to have had enough of weapons in the war, so now they do not use them as frequently. We do not have any organized gangs for the time being, and the effectiveness of the police force is satisfactory. For example, according to the latest data, in Bijeljina, we have 90 percent solved criminal cases per perpetrator unknown. [sentence as published] Also, during the war, there were fewer murders in Banja Luka than in Belgrade," Milenko Karisik, Serb Republic chief of police, said for NASA BORBA.

However, the interview with Mr. Karisik centered mostly on current issues—relations with the Implementation Force [IFOR], the international police force, and the Serbian Interior Ministry and the role of the police in ensuring the safety of Serb Republic President Radovan Karadzic.

Karadzic's Protection

[Petrovic] We have heard that a special police brigade is participating in Mr. Karadzic's protection.

[Karisik] The special brigade is part of the Serb Republic Interior Ministry, which is tasked by the government with the protection of certain people and facilities as determined by the government regulations. This, of course, includes the state leadership, and the Interior Ministry and the police force are carrying out their tasks successfully.

[Petrovic] Can you prevent IFOR from arresting Mr. Karadzic?

[Karisik] The institution of the state president implies certain duties for the Interior Ministry, as I have already stated. All the Interior Ministry's services will carry out their duties within their competencies both stationary and mobile [u mestu i pokretu]. Radovan Karadzic is the legitimate president of the Serb Republic state and his function is protected by legal regulations. The Serb Republic Interior Ministry has the duty, like in all other countries in the world, to protect its president.

[Petrovic] What is your cooperation with the International police force like?

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[Karisik] They arrived with the Dayton agreement. They are international policemen whose role is to monitor the work of our police, and, so far, they have a good impression of us. In practice, every police station in a municipality has an international police station with five to six observer-policemen nearby. They even carry out certain tasks with us in line with their role, and they are here to inspect us to see that our work is in accordance with the law, that is, that this law is in accordance with European standards. The international police force also arrived here with certain prejudices owing to the satanization of the Serb people during the war. They thought that various [word illegible] militias were in charge here. They were pleasantly surprised to see that there was order here. They saw that we were professionals and not savages and that we were very cooperative in the implementation of Annex 11 of the Dayton agreement.

[Petrovic] How are things with IFOR?

[Karisik] You see, recently, we have been having lots of problems with IFOR, which has slowly started to take over the civilian sector and thus to annul our legitimacy. We will soon have to sit around the table and tell the gentlemen from the international community that IFOR has been violating the legitimacy of one entity, that is, the Serb Republic Interior Ministry, with its measures in certain parts of the Serb Republic.

IFOR Exceeding Its Mandate

[Petrovic] Can you elaborate on that?

[Karisik] It refers to the freedom of movement. They want us not to carry out the control of goods, people, and vehicles deep inside our territory. If we do not do that, then it can be said that IFOR is directly stimulating drug smuggling, gun running, and crime and is enabling certain types of terrorist activities that might appear in such a surrogate state as Bosnia-Herzegovina. They will not let us have checkpoints even deep within our territory, let alone along the separation lines. Thus, they are exceeding their mandate and not acting in line with Dayton. In the northeastern sector, for example, our police are not allowed to have checkpoints on our roads. They will not let us have even 30 minutes at some checkpoint with one police car to control the traffic along a main road. In my view, everything that IFOR is doing is a form of pressure that will have to be solved at the highest political level. The worst thing is that IFOR is no good at police work since it is an army. The international police force knows what police work is and that is why they hold us, the Serb Republic Interior Ministry, in very high regard.

[Petrovic] I have spoken to some policemen who say that they were arrested by IFOR because they were wearing camouflage uniforms.

[Karisik] IFOR and the international police force want our police to be uniformed and armed in accordance with European standards. We have done that with the police force. It is a different matter that they see some people who have mixed up civilian clothes and military uniform, and they regard these people as dangerous. They do not understand that we are a poor country that has just emerged from war.

[Petrovic] Are you cooperating with the Federation Interior Ministry?

[Karisik] We do not want to cooperate with them unless there is some incident along the border.

[Petrovic] What about the Serbian Interior Ministry?

[Karisik] All this time, we have had moral and other support from them. We are in daily touch with our colleagues from Serbia. For example, in the operative sphere, we frequently have problems that have to be solved by both the Serbian Interior Ministry and the Serb Republic Interior Ministry. For example, if the perpetrator of a criminal deed flees from Serbia to our territory, and if we do not cooperate, then we cannot arrest him. We will certainly develop cooperation with Serbia since we are the same people. Our wish is to be the same police force one day.

[Petrovic] What do you mean?

[Karisik] Well, a pan-Serbian police force. That would be great.

B-H: Czech Battalion Reports Progress in Clearing Mines

AU1704104596 Prague DENNI TELEGRAF in Czech 16 Apr 96 p 8

[CTK report: "Czech Soldiers in Bosnia Finish Mine Clearance"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Bosanska Krupa—Czech Army soldiers serving in the ranks of the multinational forces in Bosnia yesterday wound up mine clearance in a part of the area of responsibility of the Sixth Mechanized Battalion. In view of the climatic conditions, the mine-clearing operation started on 9 March, announced Vladimir Palan, the Czech battalion's press and information officer. The mine clearance was carried out on Serb territory, in the deployment area of the military garrison of the Serb Republic Army's First Regional Corps. A total of 54 minefields have been cleared in the area of Otoka, Rudice, and Arapusa. The Serb sappers

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have gradually removed, in accordance with the minefield plan, 1,444 anti-infantry and 52 antitank mines. The Czech sappers' task was to verify the mine clearance, together with Serb soldiers, to take down the number of detected mines, and to maintain a protocol on the activity. During the mine clearance, Czech sappers were providing so-called combat cover for the whole operation. Three Serb soldiers were severely wounded while clearing mines. This occurred during a search for PMA-3 anti-infantry mines, which cannot be detected by a mine detector [minohledacka] but only by a mine probe [minobodec]. The mine clearance in the Czech battalion's area of responsibility will continue in other localities.

B-H: Two Soldiers Killed, Two Wounded in Mine Explosion

AU1804084896 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 0800 GMT 18 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Two IFOR [Implementation force] soldiers were killed and two injured when their vehicle hit a mine 19 km southeast of Doboj. The soldiers belong to the Nordpol brigade, which consists of soldiers from seven nations, including Danes, Swedes, Norwegians, Poles, Lithuanians, Estonians, and Latvians. It is presumed that the vehicle, which was part of a convoy, hit an antitank mine.

B-H: Three Deputies Leave SDA, Join Silajdzic's Party

AU1704130696

[FBIS Report] Sarajevo DNEVNI AVAZ in its 11 April 96 issue on page 3 carries short interviews with two prominent officials of the ruling Party of Democratic Action (SDA) following the resignation of three SDA Assembly deputies, namely, Muharem Cero, Pamuk [first name unspecified] and Ekrem Ajanovic, from their memberships in the SDA Deputies' Club with the Assembly of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

There is an interview with SDA General Secretary Mirsad Ceman, who says that these deputies probably failed to achieve their ambitions in the party. Ceman accepts that this is not an isolated case among deputies in the Republic Assembly, explaining that, since parties are political organizations promoting certain interests, such behavior is not an uncommon thing. "We assess that such a step, allowing that it has a certain political weight, has its political and moral dimensions as well. The question as to why some deputies are changing their party colors should, perhaps, be put to them," Ceman says.

Ceman denies that such occurrences have a weakening effect on the SDA's position, but says that the SDA leadership's view is that if some deputies oppose the party policy, then they should also give up their Assembly seats. Asked if they are obliged to do this, Ceman replies, "That is now a matter of legal procedure to which we may be seeking an answer. However, in this respect we had primarily in mind the political aspect of the issue. If somebody considers that the political organization, to which he belonged until recently and owing to which he was elected as a deputy, no longer deserves his confidence, then he should definitely not be acting as its deputy. In my opinion, this would be a responsible attitude toward those who voted for them," Ceman says.

Asked whether this issue might be raised in the Assembly, since such cases have occurred before, resulting in new parties suddenly becoming parliamentary parties without elections, Ceman points out that he has referred to the political aspect of this issue, whereas it is up to the legal experts to pronounce on the legal aspects.

The next interview carried by the paper is with Dzevad Mlaco, chairman of the SDA Deputies' Club. He comments on the resignations by saying that it is "well known" that the precondition for a seat in the Assembly is party membership, because it is the party that won the elections, while individual candidates were put up by the parties. Asked about the consequences of these resignations, he says, "I do not want to talk about the consequences now, because the issue ought to be assessed from all angles. I think that, if the issue is only about an act of departure that they are insisting on, it is their right to leave the party, but that should be done in all respects." Asked what respects he means, Mlaco answers that the deputies ought to leave the party completely and not to try to retain certain benefits and rights emanating from their party membership.

The newspaper also carries a short interview with Muharem Cero, one of the resigning SDA deputies. He says that he has had the impression for a long time that the SDA, having accepted dialogue with the Croatian Democratic Community (HDZ) and in view of the noninstitutionalized way in which the Federation is being established and the Dayton accord implemented, is moving in the wrong direction. "It seems to me that the SDA has acquired certain features more typical of the HDZ. The latest meeting of the SDA's Main Board has shown that such trends may lead in a direction that will eventually halt the process of reintegration and in the end may even lead to...the division of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which I fear the most," Cero points out.

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As for his future plans, Cero says that he is now working on the establishment and promotion of the Party for Bosnia-Herzegovina, which will be holding its convention on 13 April. He also expresses the hope that the deputies who have left the SDA will make it possible for the Party for Bosnia-Herzegovina to become a parliamentary party.

B-H: 'Text' of Izetbegovic Speech Given at SDA Rally

LD1604183696 Sarajevo BH PRESS in Serbo-Croatian 2000 GMT 14 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Zenica, 14 Apr (BH PRESS)—Alija Izetbegovic, Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina Presidency president and chairman of the Party of Democratic Action [SDA], today addressed a rally held on the organization of the SDA in Bilino Polje in Zenica. We are carrying the integral text of President Izetbegovic's speech:

Bismillah, dear brothers and sisters, dear and distinguished friends. As you can see, I am alive and kicking. Thank you for this warm welcome. Thank you for turning up in such numbers in this foul weather. This reflects your awareness and your interest in our mutual affairs and business. A similar gathering is being simultaneously held in Brcko. We wish to reiterate that we will fight for Brcko and win. Evidently Bosnia is today in our hearts and minds. We have set aside our personal problems for the moment in order to devote ourselves to mutual ones.

The war is over, thank God. The days of peace are back—a bitter and cold peace. We are facing enormous problems: devastated villages and towns, fatherless families, war invalids, refugees, the unemployed—such people can be counted in their thousands—and, above all, the problem of the country which some wanted to divide and tear apart.

In what direction is our development going to proceed? What can we do to make it follow the desired course?

We are here today to inform you about this and to tell you what can be done.

Prime Minister Hasan Muratovic has just informed us about the results of the Donors' Conference, which ended in Brussels yesterday. I think this is a great diplomatic victory for us. This victory has not been handed to us on a platter. It is the result of long and detailed preparations by our government and Premier Muratovic himself. So let us have a round of applause for Hasan.

It is now somewhat more certain that the reconstruction of Bosnia-Herzegovina will finally take off, which means that there will be work and salaries for thousands of demobilized soldiers and returnees in search of jobs. Reconstruction could trigger off a whole chain reaction of positive changes in the country. It is our firm intention to ensure absolute employment priority to the war disabled, demobilized soldiers, and the families of fallen fighters. He who does not adhere to this principle is not one of us.

The Brussels conference very indirectly pointed to something else—the return on the scene of the Pale strongmen Karadzic, Mladic, Ostojic, and their ilk. These are the very same people who in the spring of 1992—aided by Serbia and the former Yugoslav army—began a genocidal war against Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Bosniak people. They were lying low for a while, but—encouraged by the indecisiveness of the international community—they brazenly and openly regained the initiative in the part of Bosnia under Serb control and began openly defying the provisions of the Dayton agreement. This indecisiveness and reluctance on the part of the international community could prove to be fatal. Peace in Bosnia could be the price for this indecisiveness. Everything achieved so far has again been brought into question.

Our internal situation is also in a state of upheaval. New parties are being formed, while the opposition is becoming more radical in its mostly unfounded criticism. They are artificially generating some kind of ill will, some kind of negative energy that has a discouraging effect. The opposition believes that the presence of a foreign army increases its chances. I think they are wrong, because—at the end of the day—the elections will not be decided by foreigners but by the people.

The opposition strategy is to constantly draw attention to what has not been achieved and to keep silent about, or more precisely, to ignore all that has been accomplished, often in the most difficult circumstances. The opposition says that Podrinje is occupied, the country destroyed, the chetniks in control of almost half of the territory, the demobilized soldiers are jobless, and IFOR [Implementation Force] is limiting the sovereignty of the state. The [Muslim-Croat] federation is not working, the refugees are not returning, and so on. Unfortunately, most of this is true but they are keeping silent about, or more precisely, saying nothing about the following: Peace prevails, the people are not being killed and victimized, the dying and maiming has ceased, half of Bosnia has been defended, a strong army has been set up almost from scratch, Bosnia has been recognized by more than a hundred states, the Bosniak nation has been saved from the destruction intended for us and announced to us. They are keeping silent about these

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important facts. They are also keeping silent about the fact that Bosnia was faced with a choice in the autumn of 1991; it will either become part of Greater Serbia or it will be destroyed.

They [the opposition] do not admit that Bosnia has not become a part of a Greater Serbia and that it has not been destroyed; that it has been defended and is slowly rising from the ashes; that the standard of living is better than six months ago; that Sarajevo, used to only shells, hunger and darkness, is now free, illuminated and its shops are well stocked; that a great number of soldiers have found jobs; that people in Bosnia speak and write freely, they are setting up parties, they are even free to lie and no one is prosecuting them for their words.

In addition to misfortunes caused by the unprovoked, aggressive, and genocidal war, all these good and positive achievements are also the truth about Bosnia, the truth which is constantly being ignored and suppressed.

Why is this being done? In order to cause confusion among the people and to seize power. Fabrications and half-truths are being used as means in the struggle for power.

If the SDA had not existed, Bosnia would have been a province of Greater Serbia today, or it would have been destroyed. The Social Democratic Party [SDP] could not have saved it from such a fate, not to mention certain minor parties. Had it not been for the SDA, the SDP would not exist either. There would be a Communist Party of Bosnia-Herzegovina or Milosevic's Socialist Party [of Serbia] as an integral part of a Socialist Party in some kind of rump Yugoslavia. We have enabled the transformation of the Communist Party into the SDP, we have launched the process of democratization in this part of the world, and, from a historic point of view, we paid a huge price for this between 1945 and 1995.

A new party was founded in Sarajevo yesterday. Its founders claim to be fighting for a Bosnian Bosnia. They probably want to say that we are advocating a Muslim Bosnia. Alright then, let this be so, but the truth is that they are not fighting for Bosnia but for power in Bosnia, and these two things are not the same. For the struggle has already been won in the part of Bosnia liberated by the Bosnian army, and this struggle has yet to be won in the parts of Bosnia still under Serb and Croat control. Will they plant this tree—this Bosnian Bosnia—in Banja Luka, Bijeljina, Capljina, Livno? If so, their efforts are worthy of praise, and we should all vote for that party. But there are no indications to support this. That is not their intention. All they want to do is liberate the already liberated Bosnia, while leaving its more unfortunate, unliberated part to others.

That is why I am speaking of a power struggle. True, a power struggle in a democratic Bosnia—as created by us—is perfectly legal, so good luck to them. But power struggle should not be confused with patriotism. Patriotism and concern for democracy are a different matter.

If this is not a power struggle, then it is an attempt to sober up the Bosniak people who have become excessively aware and are asking too much. It is now necessary to calm them down a little.

Some say that what we have here is fundamentalism, Islamic, of course. The proof for this is that the president goes to the mosque on Fridays. But both distinguished President Clinton and Chancellor Kohl go to church, and nobody views that as suspicious.

It was customary for me to ask my critics from the opposition what they suggest. It is true—said I—that the federation is not working, so what do you suggest? There are three armies in Bosnia, this is very bad—what do you propose we should do to create only one, Bosnian army? In Mostar, the Croat Defense Council or the Croatian Democratic Union is procrastinating, what do you think we should do to put an end to these obstructions? Croatia is pursuing a two-faced policy, do you think we should sever ties, etc.? As you know, there are many such issues.

My collocutors were usually people with academic titles, but never, really never, did I receive a reply, nor did I have an impression that my learned collocutors knew it. These critics are like a doctor who tells you that you have a fever, which you know yourself quite well, but they do not tell you what the remedy is, nor do they know it. Anyhow, you know them, you ask them the aforementioned or other questions, and you will understand what I am talking about.

Therefore, I have come to the conclusion that I should not dwell on their stories and that I should pursue my own path. There is no magical solution, only patient and persistent work is necessary.

Opposition parties are opposition parties—they are not burdened with everyday problems, and have enough time for propaganda and media activities. They are seizing all our mistakes and have the right to do so if we give them reasons for it, and there are reasons, as there are indeed such mistakes.

For instance, a president of a municipality, member of our party, has not found enough time in a month to receive a soldier who was thrown out of his apartment together with his family. Does a municipal president have any other more pressing business than to receive a soldier who, together with his wife and children, has

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been thrown onto the street? As he has more pressing business to attend to, he sends the man to municipal services which resort to referring to some regulations; these regulations say that the apartment belongs to a woman who has spent the past four years in Belgrade, and so on.

This is a story about people and regulations, bad people and bad regulations. I am not mentioning it by chance, as this is a story about indifference and injustice which is reappearing in different forms, if not daily, then very frequently. This is a story about authorities, all authorities including ours, on how power corrupts people and how state administration inevitably becomes bureaucratic and distant from the people and how care should be taken every day to teach the authorities to serve the people, not to serve their own purpose.

When we put forward our candidates for various responsible positions five years ago, we did it on the basis of what they said about themselves or what others said about them. We seldom had reliable criteria. The situation is now totally different. War is behind us—it is an ultimate and indisputable test. As for members of the future parliament, responsible posts in the government and the party, only people who passed the test in the war, possibly those who were directly involved in battle, should be nominated, and then no mistakes will be made. Those who defended their country in the war will be able to protect its interests in peace in the best possible way. Then it will not happen that a municipal president does not have time to receive a soldier who is seeking protection; our state administration will be less bureaucratized.

Let us leave the opposition parties to do their job, let us continue with ours. Spring and peace have arrived. We should get down to work. Let us help our people out during the sowing season. Let us organize collective assistance to those families left without men. Let us organize the afforestation of deforested areas. Let us clean our towns and villages. These are all collective jobs in which our [party] members can take part and help out our people and state.

Let us conclude by reiterating what we want.

We want un undivided Bosnia in which freedom reigns and in which the centuries-old tradition of tolerance between religions, nations, and political convictions continue to exist. This is the first thing that we want. Is it not so?

We want our refugees to return to their homes, all to return to their homes. That is the first remedy for this ailing country.

We demand that IFOR extend full support for this process, which has not been the case so far. We demand this, and this is the second thing we are asking. We demand that war criminals be arrested and duly punished. This is the second medicine for this ailing country.

We are not blaming entire nations for our misfortune. Only individuals are to blame, despite the fact that they are so numerous that they themselves constitute a criminal nation. Guilt is never collective, it is always individual. So here, in the prosecution of war criminals, we will ask IFOR to assume its part of the responsibility. For, at the end of the day, this will determine the success or failure of its own mission.

We want the search for missing persons to go on. We will fight for every individual. If he is alive, we will secure his release; if he is dead, we will give him a dignified burial and find his murderers.

We want to embark on the reconstruction of our war-ravaged country, so our people can start reaping the fruits of their labor. Priority must be given to the war disabled, families of fallen soldiers, and to participants in the war of defense.

We want to have an effective defense system; we need a small but well-trained and equipped army relying on the broad base of the armed population. Every honest Bosnian should have a rifle.

In foreign policy we want to rely on three points. This is our famous three-legged stool: We want to rely on the United States, Europe, and the Islamic world. We do not want to stand on only one leg.

We want many other things, but these are our seven constant objectives, faraway signals that direct our steps.

It is time for me to wind up.

This is not an election rally. This is a meeting needed after four years of war. However, when we do plan an election rally we will look for the biggest field in Bosnia and gather a million people. We can do it because the people support us. Until we meet there, I wish you good health and may God be with you.

Dear brothers and sisters, I have ended my address but I still have something to tell you. I have something else I want to lay on your hearts and present an idea which you will not like very much. Please be calm when you hear it, greet it with an applause if possible, and think about it.

I want to tell you about reconciliation in Bosnia, about reconciliation for the sake of Bosnia, and reconciliation for the sake of our children and our grandchildren.

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But this reconciliation has one condition: War criminals must be mercilessly hounded to the ends of the earth. That is our condition.

This was not part of my original speech, this is an idea which I wish to present to you and urge you to think about. I implore you to learn and to get accustomed to the word reconciliation. Whoever loves Bosnia cannot hate that word, because there cannot be a Bosnia without reconciliation, without peace, even in some distant future. You should think about that, I beg you to get used to that word.

In short: War criminals are to be pursued to the end while the common people should be forgiven some day.

B-H: Kapetanovic Hopes for Personnel Changes 'Soon'

LD1704225196 Sarajevo Televizija Bosne i Hercegovine in Serbo-Croatian 2000 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The sanction for failure to implement the tasks under the Sarajevo agreement on the federation is the dismissal of those directly responsible. Every task, as we know, has a deadline and name attached to it. The obvious delay in the implementation of certain provisions has led us to ask those responsible whether someone is going to lose his job.

[Correspondent Sanela Fazlic] The agreement on the federation, signed on 30 March this year, is one of those in which, for the first time, names are precisely stated of those responsible for particular tasks to be completed within specified deadlines. This agreement contains Paragraph 8 of the Geneva declaration which states that the president and vice president of the federation, that is Kresimir Zubak and Ejup Ganic, will submit a report to the Assembly on personnel changes, that is, that those persons who do not complete their commitments within the given deadline will be removed from their posts.

A number of tasks under this agreement have not been carried out. The federal parliament is in continuous session, no personnel changes are forthcoming. We sought answers to the question of why there have been no personnel changes from federal officials. This is what we have learned.

[Begin recording] [Zubak] It is obvious that we cannot realize parts of the Sarajevo agreement because of the deadlock here in the Assembly. I do not want to comment on who is blocking the Sarajevo agreement, but you have seen during the discussion how this is proceeding and you have seen that we cannot find a way out of this impasse, among other things, because of the deputies' positions.

[Mariofil Ljubic, speaker of the constituent assembly of Bosnia- Herzegovina] There is no deadlock. Those in the assembly who signed the Sarajevo agreement should have sent it on time so the assembly could examine what was agreed and signed. The assembly includes everything on the agenda which comes within its competence. I do not think anyone can criticize the assembly's work. The deputies will not be a voting machinery which simply raises its hands and endorses what has already been agreed.

[Federation Prime Minister Izudin Kapetanovic] As far as the Sarajevo agreement on the federation is concerned, I consider that the government on the whole, or rather its members who are bound under the agreement, have carried out its tasks. One or two tasks remain, which are a question of political agreement and which the government cannot objectively conclude at the present time.

[Fazlic] Will there be personnel changes? Under Paragraph 8 of the Geneva declaration, this agreement says that there should be.

[Kapetanovic] We have undertaken that there will be personnel changes, and if the president of the federation and vice president of the federation jointly agree, there will be personnel changes.

[Reporter] When?

[Kapetanovic] Very soon, I hope. [end recording] [passage omitted]

B-H: Ukrainian Deputy FM Discusses Reconstruction

AU1704185196 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1700 GMT 17 Apr 96

[Report by Zenaida Adilovic—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] As part of his visit to the capital city of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Ukrainian Deputy Foreign Minister (Volodymyr Khandogy), held talks with Ejup Ganic, member of the state presidency, and handed him, on behalf of Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma, a letter for Alija Izetbegovic, Presidency president of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Ukrainian Minister (Khandogy) also held talks with Jadranko Prlic, minister of foreign affairs of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. After the meeting, they held a news conference. Zenaida Adilovic has the details:

[Adilovic] Bosnia-Herzegovina Foreign Minister Jadranko Prlic spoke about the talks with the prominent guest from Ukraine. This is the first official contact since the establishment of diplomatic relations between

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Ukraine and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Here is what Minister Prlic said about the talks:

[Prlic] We came to the conclusion that there are significant cooperation opportunities [words indistinct] similarity of the political situations that our two countries are facing. The minister briefed me on the Ukrainian support in the reconstruction process. I expressed readiness for the Ukrainian firms, together with others, to take part in the process of reconstruction of Bosnia-Herzegovina on a commercial basis. [passage omitted]

[Adilovic] According to Ukrainian Deputy Foreign Minister (Volodymyr Khandogy), this meeting confirms the two countries' wish to establish economic, political, and scientific-technical cooperation as soon as possible.

[(Khandogy) in Ukrainian, fading into translation into Serbo-Croatian] Ukraine had been trying to help solve the crisis from the very beginning of the aggression against Bosnia-Herzegovina. Ukraine, like the rest of the world, welcomed the Dayton agreement and the signing of the peace agreement in Paris. Our country has expressed its readiness to take part in the process of realization of what has been agreed and in the process of the postwar reconstruction of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Regardless of the very difficult economic situation in Ukraine, the government of our country has decided to offer financial help of $50,000 (?for) the elections in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Ukrainian delegation is satisfied with this visit to Sarajevo, which represents an important step in the development of good relations between Ukraine and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

B-H: Military Officials View Cooperation, Freedom of Movement

AU1704181196 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1700 GMT 17 Apr 96

[Report by Dzemaludin Ralic from Tomislavgrad]

[FBIS Translated Text] We have just received a report from Tomislavgrad, where the most senior representatives of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina Army, led by General Rasim Delic, and the Croat Defense Council [HVO], led by Colonel Gen. Zivko Budimir, chief of the General Staff, today held talks. The talks were also attended by Avdo Hebib, minister of internal affairs of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and his deputy Jozo Leutar. Dzemaludin Ralic reports:

[Ralic] The main topics of the talks were the freedom of movement in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina as a whole, the place and role of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina's Joint Command in the new conditions, and further cooperation in setting up the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina Army.

During the discussion about freedom of movement, the participants concluded that the provisions of the Dayton agreement must be respected, and that both sides must do their utmost to remove the causes of the restrictions to free movement, and to ensure a normal flow of movement of people, goods, and transportation.

Minister Hebib emphasized the total involvement of the workers of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in the prevention of incident situations in general which have happened.

Regarding the fate of the missing members of the HVO and the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina Army, the top persons in these formations have been asked to demand that the International Red Cross embark on the search as soon as possible, and to issue a report on the missing so that people can learn the truth about their fate.

They also discussed other issues in order to improve cooperation in setting up the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

We have received the statements by Messrs. Rasim Delic, Zivko Budimir, and Avdo Hebib, but this is all for now from Tomislavgrad. We will have a more detailed report in the Hronika Dana program.

B-H: Croat, Muslim Army Commanders Meet, Air Issues

LD1704173396 Mostar Croatian Radio Herzeg-Bosnia in Serbo-Croatian 1600 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In Tomislavgrad today, Colonel General Zivko Budimir, Croat Defense Council [HVO] chief of staff, met Rasim Delic, commander of the Muslim army's general staff; the commanders of the five corps [of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army]; and Avdo Hebib and Jozo Leutar, respectively minister and deputy minister of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation. Zoran Kresic reports:

[Kresic] The four-hour meeting was held behind closed doors. Statements for the press were given after the meeting. According to Colonel General Zivko Budimir, the meeting focused on current problems regarding the implementation of the Dayton agreement and activities aimed at breathing life into the federation. The Bosnia-Herzegovina Presidency decision to provide salaries only for members of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army was one of the topics. This is what HVO Chief of General Staff Budimir said on the subject:

[begin Budimir recording] I told General Delic that the HVO General Staff has made a public statement demanding that the Bosnia-Herzegovina Presidency alter its decision and that the same regulations be applied

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to members of the HVO and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Croat Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia. Otherwise, representatives of the Croat people in the federation—in federal and republican bodies—should procure for the HVO and the Herzeg- Bosnia Ministry of Internal Affairs personnel the same compensation as that granted to the members of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army and Ministry of Internal Affairs. [end recording]

[Kresic] Rasim Delic, chief of the general staff of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army, said they discussed the implementation of the Dayton agreement provisions concerning the movement of individuals and army units at a time when IFOR [Implementation Force] is imposing additional requests. They also discussed questions of armament and control in the federation as part of a joint task, said Delic, adding that they also talked about activities aimed at accelerating the adoption of a law on the defense of the federation, with the creation of a federal army as the ultimate goal.

[Begin Delic recording] We mostly discussed how we could try, as quickly as possible and through competent (?political) institutions, to ensure the start [as said] of a U.S. program on equipping and training the federal army. It can obviously start. I can bear witness to that, because the necessary funds have been approved and collected [word indistinct] so that the U.S. team can start. I think that's the most important thing at present. [end recording] [passage omitted]

B-H: 3d Corps 7th Muslim Brigade Undergoes Reorganization

AU1704201396 Sarajevo VECERNJE NOVINE (European edition) in Serbo-Croatian 17 Apr 96 p 11

[Report by Sl. Avdic: "Charging at Knowledge and Structure"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina's Army day yesterday was ceremonially marked in the 7th Muslim Chivalrous Brigade of the 3d Corps. With the army transformation brought about by the Dayton agreement, this brigade is moving into the professional sector. It consists of parts of the 319th and 330th Brigades, three maneuvering battalions, a Green Beret company, and a tank company. With this structure, the 7th Muslim Brigade will transform itself into a mechanized brigade.

"We are creating a new army now. We must change many things in this process; however, the 7th Brigade will remain for as long as we live," Brigadier General Sakib Mahmuljin, commander of the 3d Corps, emphasized. [passage omitted]

B-H: Federation Forum Discusses Promotion of Free Media

AU1704152796 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1300 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The second [word indistinct] meeting of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina Forum was held in the U.S. Embassy in Sarajevo yesterday, 16 April. [First name indistinct] Johnston, charge d'affairs, chaired the meeting on the promotion of free media in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The participants in the meeting discussed the development of the network of independent television and radio stations [words indistinct] press during the elections, and the status of the federal law on the media. This was stated in a press release by the U.S. Embassy.

The Federation was represented at the meeting by Prime Minister Izudin Kapetanovic, [words indistinct] and Jozo Leutar. Hasan Muratovic, Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina's prime minister, led the delegation of the Republican Government. Also attending the meeting were representatives of the OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe], high representative Carl Bildt's office, the Soros Foundation, and IFOR [Implementation Force].

The next meeting, which will be held next week, will focus on other important issues regarding the Federation's development.

B-H: Reportage on Bosniaks Held in Secret Labor Camps

AU1704191796 Hanau NOVA BOSNA in Serbo-Croatian 17 Apr 96 p 9

[Article by K. Mulalic: "Suffering Bosniak, Name's Serbian"]

[FBIS Translated Text] According to reliable information available to us, the fascists are holding nearly 2,000 imprisoned Srebrenica men in secret camps. Reports that 1,124 persons taken prisoner in July 1995, following the occupation of Srebrenica, are incarcerated in the camps Pilici near Zvornik, Doboj, Novo Selo near Bijeljina, and in the town of Bijeljina itself have recently "leaked" from the Serbian side.

Apart from the men capable of military service, there are also some youths and old men among these inmates. The majority of them have "a work assignment" to hard labor. We do not have any information on who the inmates of the Doboj torture chamber are working for, but it is known that the inmates in Bijeljina, Pilici, and Novo Selo are engaged in strenuous jobs in Bijeljina's

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Zitopromet, on private farms, and in lumbering in the vicinity of Lopare and Ugljevik.

The inmates who work on the Bijeljina Serbs' private farms do not have armed escorts. Full responsibility for them is borne by the landlords who hire them. The hiring of inmates is realized according to a price list determined by the government of the so-called Serb Republic. Not a single inmate can work for a private entrepreneur if a certain compensation is not paid first.

So where are the rest of the Srebrenica men imprisoned?

It is difficult to give an exact answer to this question. According to some information there are Srebrenica inmates in camps in Susica near Vlasenica, Han Pijesak, Milici, Rogatica, Sokolac, and Foca. Several hundred Srebrenica men are performing the most strenuous of jobs in the Vlasenica bauxite mine and the Sase mine near Srebrenica.

Karadzic's criminals did not register these men as prisoners. In case of any international control they are registered as "workers of Serbian nationality." They were, therefore, given Serbian names. The International Red Cross Committee as well as some UN offices have been informed on numerous occasions about the existence of many secret camps in which the imprisoned Bosniaks from Srebrenica and other towns are being kept. However, nothing has been done to help liberate these people.

[Box, p 9]

Bosnia-Herzegovina Government Action Sought

We have learned unofficially that some families whose members are imprisoned in Bijeljina, Novo Selo, Doboj, and Pilici have demanded greater engagement concerning their liberation from the Bosnia-Herzegovina Government. For the time being there is no information on whether our government has undertaken any specific steps in this direction. If it has failed to so, then this should be done as soon as possible, because there are many sick, exhausted, and infirm people among the imprisoned Srebrenica men. Apart from their own engagement in the liberation of the inmates, the UN Security Council should also be briefed about this, and immediate action should be requested in this respect. It is impermissible that Milosevic and Karadzic should deceive the entire domestic and international public. It is not true that only 26 imprisoned Bosniaks are being kept in the jails of the so-called Serb Republic, Serbia, and Montenegro. The number is a hundred times greater.

B-H: Karadzic Orders Preparation of KIA, POW Lists

LD1704133996 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 1242 GMT 17 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Sarajevo, 17 Apr (SRNA)—Radovan Karadzic, president of the Serb Republic and commander of its armed forces, today issued an order to all [army] units to update and complete lists of soldiers killed in action [KIA] and POW's.

This order is aimed at showing the international community that the Muslim and Croat sides are still hiding a large number of Serbs in their prisons.

The Serb Republic president supports efforts made by the state commission and the association of families of killed soldiers and POW's aimed at having all POW's finally released.

Responsibility for this continued illegal and inhumane imprisonment of Serb soldiers in Croat and Muslim prisons does not only rest with the Croat and Muslim sides.

The international community is also responsible as it has been issuing threats to the Serbs for slight delays but, when it comes to Serb POW's, it has not done anything, says the order by the Serb Republic president forwarded to SRNA by the bureau for press contacts.

B-H: Mayor Insists on Priority for Serb Resettlement

AU1804090096 Paris AFP in English 0839 GMT 18 Apr 96

[By Kevin McElderry]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Brcko, Bosnia-Herzegovina, April 18 (AFP)—Nearly 30,000 Serbs who fled to Brcko must be given the chance to resettle in this northern Bosnian town before its former Muslim residents can return, its Serb mayor has said.

In an interview with AFP, Miodrag Pajic insisted the 27,000 refugees take priority over Muslims who fled the town as it fell to Serb control following bitter fighting.

And, in an apparent attempt to swing the vote when Brcko's future status is eventually decided by international arbitration, he said he was ready to offer Brcko citizenship to any Serb refugees in the town who wanted it.

The town's future is considered a powder-keg issue which could rebound on the Dayton accord if tensions erupt into violence.

About 50 percent of Brcko's pre-war population was Muslim, but it is now dominated by Serbs, including

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refugees from Sarajevo, the former separatist Croatian Serb region of Krajina and towns handed to Muslim Croat federation control.

It also holds a vital strategic position along a narrow corridor across northern Bosnia linking the two main elements of the Republika Srpska, the Serb counterpart to the federation.

At a rally Sunday [14 April], 5,000 Moslems who fled Brcko urged the international community to ensure they could return safely and pledged there would be no peace in Bosnia until they were home again.

Pajic said Muslims were free to return if their former homes were empty, but could not return to any occupied by refugees until the refugees themselves had accommodation of their own.

"In houses where there are people from Sarajevo or Krajina, for example, they cannot come back because they (the refugees) can't get their own homes back as Muslims are living there now," he said.

Observers note however that the few houses not totally ruined, especially in the former Muslim suburb of Brod, are occupied by refugees.

Only when the Serbs had been provided for could Muslims consider coming back, he said, and warned that returning any sooner was not a good idea—"memories of the war are still fresh."

Under the Dayton accord, Brcko's future is to be decided by an arbitrator due to be appointed by the international community by the end of May.

Elections scheduled to be held in both the Muslim Croat and Serb entities by late September will have a key bearing on that decision, but much depends on who will vote where.

Muslim Croat leaders have often voiced fears that Brcko's Serb leadership is flooding the town with refugees to swing arbitration in its favour .

Pajic said the refugees should be able to vote in the town "because they are our citizens now. Some of them have lived here for four years. They can all have Brcko citizenship if they want it."

"Everyone has the right to choose where they want to live. The Serbs do not want to go back (to their former towns) to vote," he added.

Although insisting he would respect arbitration, he said giving the town to Muslim Croat rule would be "a source for problems and misunderstandings" and "not in the interests of the international community."

As for freedom of movement enshrined by Dayton, Pajic said Muslims were free to visit their former homes provided they gave advance notice.

A UN civilian police source confirmed Muslims were allowed to visit but said it was only Fridays or Sundays and they had to run a gauntlet of Serb special police.

In a final grim indication of the enormous task ahead in firming up the Bosnian peace process, Pajic said Serbs and Muslims would never be able to live together again.

"It's impossible after this war. We can build a good life next to each other, we can trade and cooperate, but we cannot live together," he said.

"It was tried and it led to war and more than a million victims. That's enough experiments. I don't want my child living in (the Muslim Croat-held town of) Tuzla and learning and being educated under (Islamic) Sharia law," he added.

Meanwhile the influx of refugees looks set to continue. A spokeswoman for the municipality said the Serb authorities were supplying material to repair houses for another 3,000 Serbs now in a camp outside Sarajevo.

B-H: Serb Socialists Protest 'Slander' by Authorities

AU1704171896 Belgrade POLITIKA in Serbo-Croatian 15 Apr 96 p 14

[Article by D. Pejak: "Socialists Rising"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Zvornik, 14 April—Whether one wishes to admit it or not—and this primarily refers to the current authorities in the Serb Republic—there is no dilemma: The Socialists on the left bank of the Drina River are on the rise, their ranks are swelling, and they are increasingly more trusted because their motto, "to live normally," faithfully reflects the tendencies and the desires of the nation. Generally speaking, the Socialist Party of the Serb Republic [SPRS] inevitably represents a serious force to be reckoned with by those who aspire to gain (or retain) power.

This is the only correct conclusion that one can reach on the basis of everything that could be heard at the municipal electoral conferences over the past few days, as well as in the talks with the people who, despite everything that has been accompanying their activities (the authorities' efforts to stop the Socialists from emerging from the underground onto the public political scene, banning the organization of their rallies on premises that seem to represent common assets, anonymous threats, "by God, even hoes have been used..."), have mustered the courage to set foot on the political scene in the effort, now that the guns

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have fallen silent and the Dayton accord has started being implemented, to finally live normally, like human beings.

Unification With Serbia

From the profusion of everything that could be heard over the past few days, we should single out: The Serbs are very grateful to their brothers on the right bank of the Drina River who helped them "wholeheartedly" during the war, among whom the Socialist Party of Serbia occupied a prominent place, and the objective of which was the unification with Serbia.

The Socialists of the Serb Republic also believe that the merits of Slobodan Milosevic, especially regarding peace, are immeasurable.

Assessing the electoral activities so far in Semberija, Majevica, Podrinje, Birca, and Romanija, Dr. Nedjo Djuric, member of the Executive Committee of the SPRS Town Committee and a doctor of geology says:

"The activities were carried out very successfully, we are particularly satisfied because a great number of experts entered the new leaderships that will work on further party development. The biggest problem in these activities came from the current authorities, which tried to obstruct the work of our party by all means. The more they banned us, however, the more interest people showed in us. This was, actually, the best possible political marketing for us."

According to Djuric, the SPRS has about 5,000 members on these territories, however, "not on paper."

We have already reported that the electoral conference in Osmaci near Zvornik, where the headquarters of the Serbian Municipality of Kalesija is situated, was held in something that could be called a room, which had previously been occupied by the Serb Republic army. The authorities did not permit the holding of the rally in the usual place, and that is why Pero Lozancic, president of the local Socialists, says: "Holding rallies in open spaces is not permitted, so, as a 'last resort' option, we planned to hold the meeting in the Implementation Force [IFOR] tent. In Vlasenica, for example, where the electoral conference is supposed to be held in the next few days, they tried to deter the Socialists with 'the argument' that the football players from Skopje will stop over for lunch at the Panorama Hotel."

The authorities, among other things, also accuse the Socialists for "the divisions within the Serbian nation."

Reconstruction of Destroyed Installations

"Exactly, we want division within the Serbian nation, however, a division into the honest and dishonest, the workers and the nonworkers," Miladin Dragicevic, secretary of the municipal committee of the SPRS Zvornik, says, adding: "They are free to quote us on that." Dragicevic emphasizes afterward: "As opposed to the ruling party, we are calling on all experts to help in the realization of what are, at the moment, the three fundamental tasks—the reconstruction of everything that has been destroyed, the reanimation of the stalled production, and compensation for everything that was stolen or seized." Dragicevic also told us: "Numerous acclaimed experts whose expertise nobody can dispute left due to the irrational policy of the authorities, which needed obedient pawns rather than cadres. They did not flee from the guns, but from the politics."

In light of the accusations of their political opponents, Dr. Slobodan Djeric from Vlasenica says, not without indignation:

"We are being smeared with unfounded and, let me emphasize, very dangerous slander. We are primarily reproached for wanting to bring back the fez, that is, to live together with the Muslims, which, I believe, is impossible after the genocide by all three sides. None of the Socialists discussed this with anyone, and we did not sell guns and grenades to the Muslims. Also, they accuse us of being deserters—that we traded in Serbia and Cyprus—that now, when the Serb Republic has been created, we are allegedly emerging from shelter to take power. However, we were all in the army."

As Dr. Nedjo Djuric says, although the current authorities try to deny it, the following cannot be forgotten:

"Had we accepted all 'the signals' that came from Serbia and from Slobodan Milosevic in due time, we would have been free for longer. We had the opportunity to experience in these six months that it is very nice to live in freedom...."

B-H: Serbs Demand Release of Gen Djukic

LD1704192096 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 1846 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Sarajevo, 17 Apr (SRNA)—The [Bosnian] Serb Republic is demanding that the Hague tribunal immediately and unconditionally release General Djordje Djukic. This was stated this evening by Jovan Zametica, spokesman for the Serb Republic president.

"We have learned that Gen. Djukic's health has suddenly worsened," the statement given to SRNA by the Serb Republic press office says. It stresses that Gen. Djukic is still being held in The Hague simply because he is a Serb officer.

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"Gen. Djukic must be provided with appropriate medical care in his own home, among his own people and in freedom," the statement stresses.

Emphasizing that the Muslim accusations against Gen. Djukic are fabricated, the statement adds that their acceptance by the Hague tribunal is further evidence that this court was founded with the intention of politically discrediting the Serb nation.

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Croatia: Commentary Criticizes Bosnians' Treatment of HVO

AU1704135096 Zagreb VJESNIK in Serbo-Croatian 15 Apr 96 p 4

[Commentary by Marinko Bobanovic: "HVO and Occupation"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The dispute that has been simmmering over the last couple of days over the passage of the Law on Defense of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina has stirred up emotions among the federal partners again. As it is one of the most important laws, by which the model of organization of the federal army is to be established, and as it is some kind of test of the true implementation of the Dayton agreements, it is not all a matter of indifference how each side's contribution to the defense of Bosnia-Herzegovina is assessed. Unfortunately, according to statements one can hear from the Bosniak leadership, the merits of the HVO [Croatian Defense Council] have been played down. It is therefore appropriate to remember the very beginning of the aggression on Bosnia-Herzegovina and to recall that the first attacks were repelled precisely by the members of the Croatian public who understood in time what would happen.

Why do they persistently forget the autumn of 1991, when the Croatian village of Ravno was attacked and leveled with the ground? After the first act of aggression in the neighboring country, the republican authorities of Bosnia-Herzegovina answered "This is not our war!" Then the attacks on Bosanski Brod, and on Kupres Plateau, Livno, followed... with the aim of subduing Bosnia-Herzegovina completely by military occupying its western parts. The HVO units were the first to resist the aggressor in an organized manner, preventing the aggressor from reaching Nevesinje through Bugojno and Jablanica, or reaching the sea down the Neretva River. Having defended the area in which Croats lived, the HVO prevented the fall of the whole of Bosnia-Herzegovina into the hands of the Serb Army, by which also southern Croatia was defended.

Despite that, in the recent resolution of the Presidency of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the HVO has once again been lined up with the paramilitary formations and equated to the Serb aggressor. It seems that, behind this, there is the intention of certain people from the SDA [Party of Democratic Action] who are at the head of republican and federal institutions of authority to render the implementation of all agreements on the implementation of the Federation impossible. The seriousness of this most recent situation caused the president of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kresimir Zubak, to send a letter to Michael Steiner, the deputy of the high representative for the implementation of the peace agreement, in which he asks Steiner to make President Izetbegovic personally act against such moves in the public media and the parliament.

In the shadow of this political turmoil, the fourth anniversary of the establishment of the HVO Military Police was celebrated in Ljubuski on Saturday. A mass was held for the three dead and 191 killed members of the HVO Military Police. It is a sign that the Croatian people will not forget those who sacrificed their lives to defend Croatian soil and also to defend Bosnia-Herzegovina. At the same time that is a sign that one will not allow anyone to declare them and all the others who gave their lives first to stop the Serb aggressor to be enemies who occupy their own country.

Croatia: Penal Reform Said To Curb Press Freedom

AU1704125196 Rijeka NOVI LIST in Serbo-Croatian 13 April 96 pp 10-11

[Commentary by Snjezana Pavic: "European Court of Human Rights Against Censorship and Voluntarism"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The White House has requested the Department of Justice to investigate how a piece of confidential information came to appear in the media. It is an article in THE WASHINGTON POST that reveals that, at the terrorism summit held in Egypt in the middle of March, Bill Clinton told Russian President Boris Yeltsin that he would support his reelection.

Published in the Croatian media at the peak of the discussion about whether freedom of information being further jeopardized by the penal law reform, this report could only raise a derisive smile among those who were at least a bit informed—because the only thing one could find confidential in this case was the identity of the person who told the journalist what everybody knows: that the United States supports Yeltsin and that it is interested in doing so in the future, too.

Apart from a superficial resemblance, this reaction by the American authorities to the work of journalists does not have much to do with the practice one wants to introduce into Croatia by these changes of the penal laws. It did not occur to the American Administration to sue the publisher or journalist responsible for publishing what they said was confidential information. In their opinion, the person who disclosed the secret is responsible, just as was envisaged in Croatian legislation—before the changes.

The extension of criminal responsibility to the publication of a state secret has caused a storm of reaction, not only in the Croatian public. Vladimir Primorac, the

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representative of the Liberals and a distinguished legal expert, has pointed out that such legal innovations are impermissible—since in a case in which incrimination for revealing a state secret has already been determined by law, it could happen that a journalist is tried for a deed for which someone else has already been sentenced. It is an absurd legal practice, Primorac said, arguing that such a provision is, in fact, aimed at curtailing freedom of speech. The sharp reaction that the guild organizations sent to the chairman of the House of Representatives, Vlatko Pavletic, shows that there is a danger of responsibility for disclosing state secrets being extended to journalists, too, which, in the opinion of the Executive Board of the Croatian Journalists' Society certainly runs counter to the constitutionally guaranteed freedom of public information. In a situation in which almost all information may be proclaimed a state or military secret, the threats of legal sanction for disclosing a state secret disables the free flow of ideas and information, and the public is denied its basic right, the right to be informed. The opinion of the Croatian Journalists' Society [HNO] that the direct result of penalizing the very publication of a state secret will be journalists' self-censorship is obviously shared by the "Reporters Without Borders." In their letter to Pavletic, they point out that the fact that state and military secrets are not defined by special laws, which seems to be particularly dangerous in the new penal context, will make some journalists apoly more self-censorship, while others will be prosecuted.

Seks's Interpretations

The "other side" is also aware of the danger of abuse in applying the law in a situation when one does not know what a state secret is supposed to be at all. Vladimir Seks, deputy chairman of the National Assembly, who has frequently been used to reflect the authorities' covert and open intentions in disciplining the independent and yellow press, has this time too taken it upon himself to defend the new legal restrictions, although he aggressively disputes the claim that he participated in creating the mini penal reform. Seks confirms that people suspect the possibility of the abuse of the institution of a state secret because any information could be declared to be a state secret if somebody in the authorities were interested in concealing it. Therefore, a law on state and military secrets should be adopted immediately after the Penal Law, Seks says. That, he thinks, would remove the fear of both the media and the public that the new penal law, as Mato Arlovic of the SDP [Social Democratic Party] warned in the Assembly debate, would put precisely journalists in a bad situation, while those who are supposed to keep state secrets and who at the same time decide what will be a state secret will be protected.

The passing of a law on state and military secrets is in journalists' interests, Bozo Novak says, but it depends on how the law is written. Both Seks and Novak agree in the determination of the key questions that this law should regulate. The law should determine who is authorized to put the stamp of a state secret on certain documents and data, and what exactly is to be understood as a state secret. There must be a maximum of clarity and precision in order to rule out any possibility of different interpretations, both Seks and Novak point out. In an interview for VJESNIK, Seks even suggests that—with the aim of avoiding self-censorship and helping journalists so that "one does not have to investigate too much"—there could even be a proposal in the law that, on the model of Britain, a multiparty body is formed within the National Assembly. According to Seks, that body would make recommendations and give advice to media representatives who wish to investigate and publish information that touches on national security, the interests of the armed forces or the police, or the country's economic interests. Such a body would, Seks explains, check with the responsible ministry whether a particular piece of information or document was a state or military secret. If, despite the "body's" recommendation, a journalist or editor publishes disputable information, he will be risking a great deal since he has been warned.

Grist to the Mill of the Authorities' Voluntarism

In the present situation, when the law on state secrets has not yet arrived before the government, state clerks arbitrarily decide what is to be protected as a state or military secret. In this way the possibility of punishing journalists for the information they publish is practically unlimited. Therefore the Croatian Journalists' Society justifiably warns that in such a legally unstructured situation "censorship, self-censorship, and voluntarism of the authorities are growing stronger, which is totally out of line with the proclaimed aspirations for democratization of life in Croatia and the obligations Croatia has assumed as a future member of the Council of Europe." Besides, the guild organization recalls the recent request of the Bureau of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and the list with the 21 conditions that Croatia has to fulfill if it wants to join the Council of Europe. As before, Croatia has again been warned that it should coordinate the media legislature and practice with the recommendations of the Council of Europe's experts, and with the principles and standards of that European institution.

While the HNO warns that the provisions about punishing journalists who publish state secrets is quite out of

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harmony with Council of Europe criteria, Seks claims that Croatia's media legislature is being coordinated with the Council of Europe protocols—precisely by the introduction of those provisions. Recalling that Croatia accepted the Council of Europe protocols on the freedom of speech and press as early as five years ago, Seks points out that in those documents the democratic principle of freedom has its necessary limitations. Seks says that they are clearly defined by the European Convention on Human Rights, specifically mentioning Paragraph 2 of Article 10.

What Limitations Are Suitable for a Democratic Society?

In this convention, which Croatia is supposed to sign at the moment of joining the Council of Europe, the first paragraph of the key Article 10 grants everybody the right to freedom of expression, including freedom of opinion, giving and taking information and ideas, without interference by the authorities. Paragraph 2 of the same article lists the circumstances in which those rights may be limited and subject to punishment, and as a framework for limitations it lists national security interests, the protection of the reputation or rights of others, and the prevention of the publication of confidential information. Not disputing the fact that, of necessity, freedom has some limitations, Bozo Novak nevertheless significantly points out that all who advocate the limitation of media rights mention exactly Paragraph 2. Of course, the debatable point is precisely the interpretation of which limitations are necessary or appropriate for a democratic society.

For instance, who is right—the journalists and part of the opposition who unanimously claim that this "mini penal reform" reintroduces the verbal offense, or Seks, who emphasizes that that is out of the question because the verbal offense has existed everywhere and at all times. In concrete cases, if Croatia really joins the Council of Europe, the European Court of Human Rights, which makes final decisions on all the limitations of democratic freedoms in member states, will decide about that. Recognition of the obligatory jurisdiction of the European Court, in line with the provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights, is explicitly requested from Croatia, and listed among the 21 obligations. Many people who recall that, despite the verbal expressions of loyalty to the European integrations, before any decision on the admission of Croatia into the Council of Europe there is a regular staging of new cases of suppression of press freedom, think that that is precisely the reason that the Croatian authorities have a panicky fear about joining the Council of Europe.

Under Protection of European Court in Strasbourg

Namely, if Croatia joins the Council of Europe, every Croatian citizen would be entitled to address the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. According to Stjepo Martinovic, longtime journalist and editor of VJESNIK, this court regularly protects the victims of prosecution and passes verdicts in their behalf. Thus it was the case recently that the court in Strasbourg rejected the ruling of a British court that had found a British journalist guilty of, allegedly, disclosing confidential information. In the explanation of the verdict, it is emphasized that the guarantee of the freedom of media is more important than the protection of private interests. Bozo Novak reminds us of some other famous cases in the world when the courts sided with journalists who had published even military secrets, with the explanation that publication was in the public interest. Thus, even in the sixties, the German magazine DER SPIEGEL won a case that had been brought because some secret materials had been published that indicated the weakness of German defense. Similar thing have also happened in the United States, where the Supreme Court ruled in favor of THE NEW YORK TIMES and THE WASHINGTON POST, which had published information on the weakness of the U.S. Army in the Vietnam war. The verdict pointed out that the papers have the right to publish articles based on confidential information because the general public must know if the country's military capability is weak. Those are two most famous cases most frequently cited by journalists when they point out that in certain circumstances they are entitled to publish even those documents that are considered to be a state secret.

Regardless of the constant emphasis that our laws are based on the model of the most democratic countries in the world, or are even more democratic than theirs, and that our judiciary is so independent that it is not jeopardized even by the miserable wages of the few remaining judges, it is hard to expect that in some future legal actions against NACIONAL or FERAL [TRIBUNE] the Croatian court would reach the same verdict as the German or American one. The admission of Croatia into the Council of Europe will strengthen the guarantee that the freedom of information granted by the Constitution will be respected—regardless of the fact that in the last court decision by the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg the journalist was said to be right only after the case had dragged on in court for seven years.

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[Box, p 11]

Arbitrariness Under Undefined Conditions

According to Vladimir Seks and his like-minded followers, the draft changes of the penal laws, which envisage that a journalist may be imprisoned because of the inability of state clerks to keep a secret, should be described as an "introduction to responsible freedom." The deputy chairman of the National Assembly thus also claims that the opponents of the new restrictive solutions "advocate the announcement of things that could harm the Croatian state and Croatian people" and that they do not care about the "safety of soldiers and citizens."

However, while one must say that the broadest journalistic circles do not doubt at all that there is a need to introduce a certain amount of professionalism into the Croatian media since they really frequently are plagued by sensationalism, nonprofessionalism, and more and more evident criteria of political fitness, the actual way of disciplining the media really is disputable. The Ethics Council of the Croatian Journalistic Society recently condemned a journalist of ST EKSKLUZIV weekly who deliberately wrote untruths about Marina Matulovic Dropulic in order to discredit her in the political and moral sense. However, the journalists' society has raised its voice against new legal limitations of the profession by Seks' criteria. It seems that the struggle for more responsible journalism does not have to go along with support for the legal prosecution of journalists in utterly undefined conditions in which any kind of arbitrariness is allowed.

Croatia: Public Said To Support Jasenovac Initiative

AU1704132096 Zagreb VJESNIK in Serbo-Croatian 14 Apr 96 p 1

[Commentary by Drazen Curic: "Jasenovac"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In recent days Walter Reich, director of the American Holocaust Memorial Museum said in a press article that "by the plan to mix the bones of the Holocaust victims in Croatia with the bones of the perpetrators of the Holocaust, Franjo Tudjman is trying to rectify history with spades," and that this "must be stopped in the name of the past, and in the name of the future."

That is in fact a reaction to President Tudjman's epistle in which he suggested that for historical reasons, but also for current political reasons, the Jasenovac Memorial Area should be converted into a memorial area for Croatia's victims of war. According to this suggestion, not only would it be a museum and a monument to remind us of all the victims of fascism, but Jasenovac would also be a memorial symbol for all the victims of communism and the Liberation War.

As expected the President's initiative attracted a lot of attention, causing different opinions and even fierce criticism from some domestic and foreign circles. The Coordination of Jewish Communities in Croatia reacted, too, warning that by such a change in the purpose of the Jasenovac Memorial Area, its symbolic meaning and message to civilization would be neutralized. Slavko Goldstein, on the other hand, has even threatened that, if the suggestion comes about, he will press charges because of the desecration of a monumental symbol and a cemetery.

The reactions that followed after the proposal to convert the Jasenovac Memorial Center are obviously largely exaggerated or personally motivated. Some of them, however, are based upon totally wrong information. Unfortunately, Walter Reich, director of the American Holocaust Museum in Washington, has also had wrong information.

First of all, it has never been said either in the proposal or in any other official document that the bones of all the victims should be mixed together and buried together. One could not have read or hear anything like that anywhere. On the contrary, in the converted memorial area the victims of communism, fascism, and the Liberation War would have their dignified and separate symbols. Furthermore, President Tudjman has not made any decision, but he has started an initiative. After all, it is the right of every citizen to suggest a decent symbol for all victims of communism and fascism. It is also logical to open a public debate about the proposal in which all interested social and political groups can express their objections and suggestions.

Only after the best and the most acceptable solution can one start the realization of the initiative, which is certainly supported by the majority of Croatian citizens.

Croatia: Serb Group Rejects Tudjman Comment on World War II

LD1804121096 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1116 GMT 18 Apr 96

["Pool" item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, Apr. 13 (TANJUG)—The Association of Serbs from the Republic of Serb Krajina and Croatia on Thursday reacted strongly to a statement by Croatian President Franjo Tudjman that "Croatians played the biggest role in the antifascist struggle in World War II."

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The association, whose membership includes a large number of WWII veterans, said Tudjman's falsifications had grave consequences for the Serbs as the bearers of the antifascist struggle in the Independent State of Croatia (NDH).

NDH was a clerico-fascist state formed in 1941 that allied itself to Nazi Germany.

The first post-war organs of authority in Croatia recognized the Serbs' antifascist struggle and equated them with the Croatian people, said a statement issued by the association.

Documents from foreign and domestic archives, including NDH, provide evidence for the fact that 106,000 Croatians were in the ranks of the fascist quisling NDH in late 1941, and only 800 in the partisan antifascist movement, said the statement.

In 1942 the number of Croatians in the ranks of NDH rose to 162,000 and the number of partisans increased to 5,280.

Another document states that in February 1942 the partisan detachment of Bania numbered 1,350 soldiers, of whom only 44 were Croatians, and in July 1943 there were only 164 Croatians in the 4,210-strong Seventh Bania Division.

The statement said NDH in August 1941 formed a legion of 3,865 soldiers and a detachment of 1,907 men and sent them to the eastern front to fight the Red Army.

The statement said the international community, above all Germany and the United States, would not be able to tolerate Tudjman's lies much longer, especially human rights violations of the few remaining Serbs in Croatia, nor to dispute the right to expelled Serbs to return to their homes.

The statement said the U.N. Security Council and humanitarian organizations had gathered many documents on Croatia's Government policy and human rights violations, in particular the genocide against the Serbs.

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FYROM: Frckovski Views Relations With FRY, Greece

AU1804131896 Vienna KURIER in German 18 Apr 96 p 4

[Interview with Macedonian Foreign Minister Ljubomir Frckovski by Ingrid Steiner; place and date not given: "Macedonian Hopes for Peace Are Placed on NATO"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Steiner] How are the problems with neighboring Yugoslavia?

[Frckovski] Not all problems have been solved by the mutual recognition of Belgrade and Skoje. The distribution of the goods and the property of the former Yugoslavia has still to be settled. However, this will be decided through negotiations, the legal framework for which has been established. Now, plans such as the former proposal of Serbian President Milosevic to divide Macedonia [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM] between Serbia and Greece definitely belong to the past.

[Steiner] But the controversy with Greece over the name still exists?

[Frckovski] Last year, we reached a bilateral agreement that settles our economic and political relations with Greece. It is working very well—and we separate it strictly from the problem of the name. We orientate ourselves on the Greek economy, and we want to do that. However, I have no great hopes for the current negotiations on the name before the United Nations in New York: We have only one name—Macedonia.

[Steiner] To what extent would a conflict in neighboring Kosovo also affect Macedonia?

[Frckovski] As a neighboring country, we have no influence on the developments within Yugoslavia. However, talks have to begin between the Albanians in Kosovo and the government in Belgrade. But I do not believe that there will be an explosion between the Albanians and the Serbs.

[Steiner] Would Macedonian membership of NATO be a guarantee for peace?

[Frckovski] We are already a member of the "Partnership for Peace." However, we are striving for full membership as soon as possible. The whole of the southern Balkans could be pacified with NATO troops in Macedonia and also in Albania. It would be advantageous for NATO itself, as the controversies between the two NATO states, Greece and Turkey, would be defused with the increased presence on the southern flank.

FYROM: Frckovski on Name Dispute With Greece

BR1804114096 Copenhagen DET FRI AKTUELT in Danish 17 Apr 96 p 18

[Report on interview with Macedonian Foreign Minister Ljubomir Frckovski by Claus Dithmer in Copenhagen; date not given: "Macedonia's Name Established"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The foreign minister of the former Yugoslav republic does not want to hear any talk of names for his country other than Macedonia [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM].

When Greece and Macedonia meet in New York today in an attempt to resolve the so-called name war, the prospects of a positive result are bad, to put it mildly.

Macedonian Foreign Minister Ljubomir Frckovski told DET FRI AKTUELT at least that there is no intention of changing Macedonia's name:

"We are trying to normalize relations with Greece, and this is going quite well. But as far as the name war is concerned, I must make clear that we cannot accept a compromise. Our name remains unshakeable."

Following the breakup of former Yugoslavia Macedonia declared itself independent in 1991. But the choice of a name aroused great indignation in Greece, which considers it has a patent on the name because of the northern Greek province of the same name.

In the United Nations, Macedonia is known by the difficult name of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, or the abbreviation FYROM.

In September last year, the two countries normalized their relations, and at the beginning of this year Greece provisionally lifted the economic embargo which was strangling Macedonia.

Five-Year Embargo

At the negotiations between the two countries in New York, Greece will insist that it wants a different name for the former Yugoslav republic.

"I am quite pessimistic. Only at a bilateral level can there be any question of a compromise. As far as we are concerned, Greece can call us whatever they want. On that point, we are quite generous," the 38-year-old cigar-smoking foreign minister said during his visit to Denmark.

He rejected alternative names such as New Macedonia or Novo Makedonia.

[Dithmer] Do people not usually have something in reserve to negotiate with?

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[Prckovski] We cannot go any further. This is a question of our name, not theirs. This is our entire history. If we were talking about the name of a third country, we could perhaps reach a compromise.

[Dithmer] Your country was recently recognized by Serbia. What will this mean?

[Prckovski] In practical terms, it means that we have cleared up the problems with our neighbors. It means that we can now start to trade and invest abroad.

[Dithmer] What does it mean for the economy? Macedonian President Kiro Gligorov has said that each month Macedonia lost $80 million due to the Serbian and the Greek embargos.

[Prckovski] This does give hope for the future of course. But it is not something we will be able to see from one day to the next. Five years of embargo have left obvious marks.

Avoided War

[Dithmer] Macedonia is the only former Yugoslav republic to have broken away—without war. How could that be accomplished?

[Prckovski] For three reasons. We have much greater ethnic tolerance in Macedonia. This has given democracy a chance to start functioning. In addition, our competent leadership and the international military presence were very important.

[Dithmer] You say ethnic tolerance. But the 23 percent who are Albanians in Macedonia seem to have a different idea?

[Prckovski] Only a few European countries can match Macedonia's advanced level of legislation for the protection of our minorities. We have instruction in Albanian in the elementary schools, an Albanian teacher training college, and an Albanian faculty at the university in Skopje (the capital—editor's note). But we have not wanted to allow a separate Albanian university, because we advocate integration, not segregation.

We have worked determinedly and successfully to avoid discrimination and segregation between the ethnic groups.

FYROM: Qian Qichen Meets Gligorov, Crvenkovski

AU1604194996 Skopje MIC in English 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The vice-president [as received] of the Government of the People's Republic of China and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen stayed on an official visit to the Republic of Macedonia [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM] this weekend.

Following his arrival at the Skopje airport, where the high-ranking guest conveyed the greetings from the friendly Chinese people, he expressed his pleasure for being able to visit the Republic of Macedonia for the first time. In the afternoon, the Chinese guest met with the head of the Macedonian Government Branko Crvenkovski.

The friendly and sincere talks focused on the development of relations between the two countries, which, to mutual satisfaction, are progressing steadily.

On Sunday [14 April], His Excellency Mr. Qian Qichen was received by President Kiro Gligorov and the Assembly Chairman Tito Petkovski. In the longer and sincere discussion with the Chinese minister, according to the announcement, President Gligorov emphasized, among the rest, that the recognition of the Republic of Macedonia by the People's Republic of China, as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, under the constitutional name, has played an exceptionally important role for the international affirmation of Macedonia.

After meeting with his host, Foreign Minister Qian Qichen and the vice-president of the Macedonian Government Ljube Trpevski held a joint news conference. Trpevski stated:

"At the just-finished talks at government level, we concluded that the political relations between the two countries are at a much higher level, but the economic relations are lagging behind. There were objective reasons for that so far, because of the blockades the Republic of Macedonia had to deal with, and the broken off communications. Now, all the pre-conditions and economic relations necessary to reach the level of developed political relations exist," Trpevski said.

According to announcements, a couple of documents on cooperation are expected to be signed soon, including the document on the protection of investments, the evasion of double taxation, etc.

The Macedonian host emphasized that, in principle, Macedonia supports China in regard to the question of unification of Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao with the original country, and believes that thanks to the wise policy of the Chinese leadership, it will be done in a peaceful way.

"We are very pleased with the development of the bilateral relations between Macedonia and China," Qian Qichen stated. "The meeting I had with President Gligorov in September, 1993 at the United Nations in New

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York, laid the foundations for the impending establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Macedonia and the Republic [as received] of China.

"China supports Macedonia's efforts to keep its territorial integrity and values the positive role it plays in the keeping of the peace and stability in the Balkans. The Republic of Macedonia supports the stance regarding the existence of one and only China, and the stance for the unification of the People's Republic of China," Qian Qichen stated.

FYROM: PDP Considers FRY Recognition 'Hasty'

AU1604181196 Zurich BOTA SOT in Albanian 11 Apr 96 p 13

[Article by R. Rifati: "A Hasty Step by the Macedonian Government"]

[FBIS Translated Text] From among the Albanian parties in Macedonia [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM], the People's Democratic Party [NDP—PDP in Albanian] has issued an announcement stating that the party hails all the agreements that contribute to stability in the region and the affirmation of its peoples, but assesses as hasty the step by the Macedonian Government to recognize the legitimacy of the so-called Yugoslav Federal Republic, whose disintegration should by all means end with an ultimate solution to the Kosova issue.

FYROM: Albanian Party Prepares for Congress

AU1704202896 Tirana RILINDJA in Albanian 17 Apr 96 p 3

[Article by I. Arsllani: "The Albanians in Power Took Not a Single Concrete Step"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Tetovo, 16 Apr—The Skopje-based Republican Party of Popular Unity [Partia Republikane e Unitetit Popullor, PRUP], led by Nevzat Halili, has conducted an analysis of its activities in March and April of this year.

Several branches among the diaspora were organized some time ago, including three in Switzerland and one in Austria. Meanwhile, the branches in Cair and Karposh in Skopje Commune and the Kumanovo branch have held assemblies. It is expected that all the branches will have held assemblies within two weeks, while the central assembly, which is expected to make a decision to hold the party's first congress, will meet on 20 April.

The branch assemblies once again noted the difficult position of the Albanian people in Macedonia [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM], in the Republic of Kosova, and in other parts of the former Yugoslavia.

The assemblies called for greater pressure from Albanian political organizations to achieve institutional status for Tetovo University.

It was said that the Albanian political parties that took part in the government and the parliament did not take a single concrete step toward realizing the Albanian peoples aspirations.

The mutual recognition between Macedonia and the so-called Yugoslavia without the recognition of the Republic of Kosova and without settling the status of the Albanians was achieved on the basis of the same anti-Albanian platform in Belgrade and Skopje. The interview by the leader of the Party of Democratic Prosperity given to the Belgrade magazine VREME a few days before the mutual recognition of the two states was against our cause and emboldened our opponents.

We now appeal to international organizations and the governments of European countries not to make the mistake of recognizing the self-styled Yugoslavia without recognizing the right to independence of the Albanians in the former Yugoslavia and in the Republic of Kosova.

There were proposals at some branch assemblies to form a national council of this party, an idea that has been supported by several distinguished Albanian intellectuals.

[Box, p 3]

The PRUP Central Presidium, at its most recent meeting about the parliamentary by-election in Constituency No. 102 in Skopje, decided to support unreservedly the candidature of Sabahudin Mahmuti, the candidate of the coalition of the PPDSh [Party for the Democratic Prosperity of the Albanians] and the PDP [Peoples Democratic Party].

The party takes the view that at this important moment, support must be given to those political forces that are promoting the unity of the Albanians in Macedonia and the realization of the collective rights of the Albanians, instead of individual interests.

The party presidium therefore appeals to its members and supporters to vote for Sabahudin Mahmuti on 21 April.

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Poland: NATO Secretary General Arrives for Two-Day Visit

LD1704185896 Warsaw TVP Television First Program Network in Polish 1730 GMT 17 Apr 96

[Releayed by Warsaw TV Polonia Network in Polish]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] NATO Secretary General Javier Solana has started a two-day visit to Poland. The first item on his agenda is a meeting with Prime Minister Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz. Monika Sieradzka is at the Council of Ministers Office:

[Sieradzka] Right now NATO Secretary General Javier Solana is being welcomed in the forecourt of the Council of Ministers Office by Prime Minister Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz. Private talks between the two politicians are to begin in a moment. [passage omitted]

[Video shows Sieradzka, with microphone in hand, turning to Solana and then Cimoszewicz in the ornate hall of the Council of Ministers. Caption says interview is live] In a few moments a private discussion between the two men will start, but, before this takes place, both politicians have agreed to give a brief interview especially for this news program.

[Sieradzka in English with superimposed Polish translation] Mr. Secretary General, in a few months' time, the members of NATO intend to make a very important decision on negotiations about NATO membership. What decision will be made as regards Poland?

[Solana in English with superimposed Polish translation] I cannot reply to this question yet, but, as you are well aware, we will be doing very intensive work in 1996 so as to be able to define by the end of the year how we are to continue as regards the expansion of NATO. However, I have to say that the relations we have with Poland are wonderful, very good; and I would like to stress one thing—namely, the generosity of Poles and their participation in the peace operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina. I was able to visit soldiers in Bosnia, and I have to say I was very impressed by their professionalism and also by their hospitality and generosity. I would really like to thank the Poles and the Polish Government for this generosity.

[Sieradzka, in Polish] Prime Minister, what will the Polish Government be doing to make sure that this decision by the NATO countries is as favorable as it can be for us?

[Cimoszewicz] I think the expansion of NATO and Poland's membership in this pact depend more on certain broader processes such as the construction of a new security structure in Europe, which the new membership of new members in the pact will affect, and also the maintenance of good relations between NATO and Russia based on partnership, and on processes such as maintaining political stability in our country, maintaining and continuing the process of very rapid economic development, and maintaining the perception of a state that is credible and responsible on an international scale. Finally, this will depend on continuing the cooperation with NATO that is already being developed. Let me remind you that we are cooperating very actively in the Partnership for Peace program and in the armed forces in Bosnia and that we are adapting our armed forces to come up to NATO standards and our legal matters to conform to the standards of this pact. I expect that the current talks we shall be conducting with Mr. Secretary General will enable both of us to confirm that we regard the process of the expansion of NATO as being a matter that is politically a foregone conclusion.

[Sieradzka] Thank you both for the interviews. This is Monika Sieradzka for the news from the Council of Ministers office.

Poland: Solana on NATO Expansion, Russian Protest

WS1804090996 Warsaw Radio RMF FM Network in Polish 0605 GMT 16 Apr 96

[Interview with NATO Secretary General Javier Solana by radio correspondent Katarzyna Szymanska-Burgino in Brussels on 15 April—recorded, Solana in French with superimposed translation into Polish]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Szymanska-Burgino] What concessions is NATO ready to make to Russia to receive acceptance for NATO expansion?

[Solana] The decision to expand was made back in 1994, and we are going to follow that path.

[Szymanska-Burgino] However, so far Russia has not given its consent to this, and it will be necessary to pay Russia for this consent. Is that not how things are dealt with in politics?

[Solana] As you know, the decision has been made already, so we have to continue this. We act carefully and clearly. The most important thing is that we are going to continue this process. The year 1996 is a year of individual dialogue with the partners that wish to join NATO. I assure you, we will continue this process.

[Szymanska-Burgino] But how are you going to convince Moscow of this idea?

[Solana] You see, Russia is a very important country in all respects. Taking into account its importance, we would like to initiate special relations with Russia. However, Russia has no right to veto NATO expansion.

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[Szymanska-Burgino] Is there a risk that NATO will agree to Poland's joining only the political structures and remaining outside the military ones?

[Solana] I do not think so, given that the expansion will be done openly—I would even say in an entirely open manner. Countries that want to join NATO will decide themselves what is the best for them. In particular, the expansion of NATO to include Poland will be complete and clear.

[Szymanska-Burgino] Are you not concerned about the Belarusian-Russian union and the rebirth of the Russian empire in general?

[Solana] If the union between Russia and Belarus was created in a voluntary and sovereign way on the part of Belarus, then we can accept this relationship. As a matter of fact, it is very important for Poland, given that the improvement of relations between the countries of [words indistinct] Europe guarantees stability in this region. However, this should be done in a sovereign and free manner.

[Szymanska-Burgino] Do you think Belarus is still a sovereign country?

[Solana] I spoke recently to the Belarusian prime minister, and he assured me that this was a sovereign decision made by his state. He spoke on behalf of his country, and I have no reason to doubt it.

[Szymanska-Burgino] What did he say about NATO expansion?

[Solana] The Belarusian prime minister is ready to accept it.

[Szymanska-Burgino] What are your expectations for your visit to Poland?

[Solana] I am going to continue our relations, which are very good at the moment; they are very profound and sincere. I will have an opportunity to talk with the Polish president and the prime minister about initiating this year an individual dialogue between Poland and NATO. I will also talk about the very important and really very significant participation of Poland in the IFOR [Implementation Force]. I would like to thank the Poles for their participation in NATO's mission in Bosnia.

[Szymanska-Burgino] What are you going to say to the Polish society, which has for several years been expecting to finally hear when their country will be admitted to NATO?

[Solana] I will reply that this decision will be made in due course. I will also reply that Poland has very good relations with NATO and that we will try to maintain these good relations.

[Szymanska-Burgino] [word indistinct] no specific deadline?

[Solana] It is very difficult to provide a deadline.

[Szymanska-Burgino] However, in one of your interviews you mentioned that the decision on the admission of new members would be made in 1997.

[Solana] No, I did not give a specific date. However, as a matter of fact, I really think that this decision will surely be made in 1997.

[Szymanska-Burgino] Recently, the issue of the corridor through Poland from Belarus to Kaliningrad has reminded Poles about the year 1939. Do you think that, if the situation is repeated, NATO will defend Poland?

[Solana] You know very well that we have very good relations with your country.

[Szymanska-Burgino] But are you ready to die for Gdansk or Warsaw?

[Solana] We are developing the relationship between Poland and NATO in a way so that the door to the alliance will open and Poland will become a member of NATO. However, so far this is all we can do.

Poland: Chief of Main Newscast on New Public TV Head

WS1704144996 Warsaw GAZETA WYBORCZA in Polish 17 Apr 96 p 3

[Interview with Adam Pieczynski, chief editor of the "Wiadomosci" television newscast, by Agnieszka Kublik in Warsaw; date not given: "One Cannot Refuse To Ask Difficult Questions"

[FBIS Translated Text] *"The controlling role of the media is a relic of the Polish People's Republic [PRL]. A journalist follows the instructions of his superiors." This latter statement, made by the new head of Polish Television [TVP], sent shockwaves through the media. "Journalists cannot serve as a propaganda tool for the state authorities," says the chief editor of "Wiadomosci."*

[Kublik] Are you afraid of Ryszard Miazek's words?

[Pieczynski] No. My reporters are naturally obliged to remain loyal to their superiors, but I can bet they will not allow themselves be used as a propaganda tool. Besides, they have to observe the Radio and Television Law that clearly states that one of the objectives of public television is to provide the citizens with the right to express their criticism and exert control.

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[Kublik] The new TVP head would probably disagree. He claims that journalists have no right to control politicians because no one bestowed such powers on them.

[Pieczynski] The times when a journalist was to convey exclusively what politicians wanted to say are over. This is no longer so, and never will be—regardless of who heads TVP or "Wiadomosci." Journalists have come to enjoy freedom of speech.

[Kublik] Yet you can find journalists who, to use Miazek's language, follow the instructions of their superiors.

[Pieczynski] That is impossible. Television is a tasty morsel, but you can easily choke on it. The public instantly detects when television is involved in some political games. In such cases, trust in both television and in those who are trying to rule it instantly evaporates. This simply does not pay off for anyone.

[Kublik] Yet you are slightly disturbed by what the new TVP head is saying?

[Pieczynski] Yes, slightly. I was particularly disturbed by the statement that public television should promote the reasoning of the state and not reflect public opinion. Of course, public television has the statutory duty of presenting the opinions of the government, parliament, the president. But it must be kept in mind that, contrary to what the new TVP head believes, society at large cannot be identified with the state or, in other words, with the group in power.

[Kublik] Miazek speaks of "guidelines" for television. What do you think about that?

[Pieczynski] I simply do not understand. It reminds me of the PRL. Back then, there was a political guideline, the only right one, and we all remember which party's it was. But whether it is a party guideline or a program guideline makes no difference.

[Kublik] The new TVP head has firmly stated he will not allow anything that is incongruent with his vision of journalism in the television he heads.

[Pieczynski] You must remember that the Supervisory Board consists of five members, and Janusz Daszczynski is to be responsible for programming.

[Kublik] Do you think Daszczynski will defend the journalists against the new TVP head?

[Pieczynski] You would have to ask Daszczynski. I hope TVP will not squander its achievements. Despite all of the mistakes we have made over the past two years, TVP remained independent. Opinion polls show social trust in television to be a high 60 percent, more than in 1992, when TVP was clearly involved in politics. The style of news reporting practiced since 1994 is clearly to the viewers' taste. As many as 76 percent claim they like television newscasts.

[Kublik] Are journalists the fourth power?

[Pieczynski] That is what people say. Journalists have the duty of watching the politicians' hands, checking them.

[Kublik] Miazek claims voters are perfectly capable of checking the politicians they vote for.

[Pieczynski] In all civilized countries, in every democratic state, the media play an extremely important role: They check whether public money is spent properly, whether the decisions made by state authorities are right. If our television is to be public and not state, it must represent various opinions, not only those of politicians. Moreover, journalists have an obligation to ask the politicians difficult and uncomfortable questions; they have a duty to carry out their own investigations.

[Kublik] The new TVP head is denying them this right.

[Pieczynski] I do not really understand that. This completely contradicts the concept of modern reporting. A journalist must seek sources of information on his own; he cannot be a conveyor for the state authorities.

[Kublik] Do you agree with Miazek that a journalist should not reveal everything he knows about a politician so as not to cast a shadow on the entire political class?

[Pieczynski] Politicians should look after their own image. It is their problem. It would be inadequate just to point out their weaknesses;, yet, if they do make a mistake, a journalist is obliged to report it.

[Kublik] Does a reporter have the right to ask Oleksy whether he was a secret agent?

[Pieczynski] He has the responsibility to do so!—if only to enable [former] Prime Minister Oleksy to disclaim the allegations and explain why they are false. I cannot imagine such a question not being asked. You cannot avoid asking difficult questions.

[Kublik] The TVP head claims that politicians are afraid of television and that this should not be so.

[Pieczynski] If they are afraid, they should change their profession.

[Kublik] Miazek says television should treat politicians, actors, businessmen, and priests on an equal basis.

[Pieczynski] In choosing their careers, politicians have to consider that they will not be treated like others

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because they have a tremendous influence on the lives of millions of people.

[Kublik] Is there anything you agree on with your new boss?

[Pieczynski] Yes, the statement that a news reporter should not comment on what a politician does or ridicule him.

[Kublik] What do you think cooperating with Miazek will be like?

[Pieczynski] Truly speaking, I do not know what kind of president Miazek will be. I judge people by their actions, not by their words. Besides, I am not welded to my chair.

• • •

Adam Pieczynski, 40, a graduate of Iberian studies. Before 13 December 1981 [imposition of Martial Law], he worked for Polish Radio, then—for four years—as a taxi driver. From the early 1980's, he cooperated with EL PAIS, the largest Spanish daily. He returned to Polish radio in 1992. Two years later he was appointed deputy head of the Radio News Agency. He began working for TVP when it was headed by Walendziak; on 1 April 1994, he became chief editor of the "Wiadomosci" newscast. Married, with one daughter.

Poland: Controversial Security Officer Reinstated

LD1704182596 Warsaw Polskie Radio First Program Network in Polish 1800 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Lieutenant Colonel Adam Hodysz was today reinstated in the ranks of the Internal Affairs Ministry. He is to hold the office of the head of the State Protection Office [UOP] division in Gdansk. Col. Hodysz was reinstated in the ranks by Internal Affairs Minister Zbigniew Siemiatkowski at the request of the acting head of UOP, Colonel Andrzej Kapkowski.

At the same time, Minister Siemiatkowski dismissed Lieutenant Colonel Henryk Zabicki from the office of the head of the Gdansk division of UOP.

Adam Hodysz, as an officer of the Security Service, collaborated under martial law with underground Solidarity components, for which he was sentenced to six years' imprisonment. In the early 1990's, he headed the Gdansk division of UOP. Under pressure from President Walesa, he was dismissed from his post. This led to strong protests from many circles. Asked why he had demanded Hodysz's dismissal, Walesa suggested that someone who betrayed once could do so again.

Poland: Plant Sells Sokol Helicopters to ROK

LD1704212796 Warsaw TV Polonia Network in Polish 1900 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Swidnik Polish Aircraft Plant has sold 35 Sokol helicopters to South Korea. The Daewoo enterprise placed the order. This is the factory's largest-ever contract. The agreement covers a period of many years. It also encompasses technical cooperation between both countries as regards the production of helicopters.

The Sokol helicopters have been made since 1986. After the collapse in 1989 of the Soviet market, to which Mi-2 helicopters were chiefly sold, the Swidnik transportation equipment factory is returning effectively to Western markets with the Sokol. About 100 helicopters have been assembled to date. They have U.S., German, Russian, and Polish airworthiness certificates. The value of the contract signed in Seoul is a trade secret. The catalogue price of the Sokol is about $3 million, but this varies according to the version and fittings of the helicopter.

Poland: Number of Foreign Refugees Rises

WS1704124796 Warsaw RZECZPOSPOLITA in Polish 17 Apr 96 p 2

[Article by "Z.L.": "Number of Refugees Growing"]

[FBIS Translated Text] *The number of foreigners seeking refuge in Poland has risen considerably lately. More than 400 foreigners—one-fifth from Armenia—are applying for refugee status within the provisions of the 1953 Geneva Convention, which was ratified by the Republic of Poland. The majority are citizens of impoverished and unstable regions of Asia and Africa. The biggest groups, apart from the Armenians, are refugees from Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Somalia, and Iraq. An analysis of most recent statistics shows that increasing numbers of people from Russia and states of the former USSR want to stay on the banks of the Vistula. These figures are not huge, yet the number of Belarusian and Ukrainian citizens who want to stay in Poland for good indicates a long-term trend.*

Krzysztof Lewandowski, director of the Migration and Refugee Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, claims that the reason the number of applicants for Polish citizenship is growing is the illegal immigration that has been developing on a massive scale. The traffic of people across the border is ever more organized, and the criminal groups that deal with this are becoming ever more professional.

In 1994, 558 foreigners applied for refugee status, claiming that they were persecuted in their homeland.

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The interior minister approved 395 applications, predominantly those submitted by refugees from the war-stricken Bosnia-Herzegovina. Last year, the number of applications rose to 842, only 104 of which were approved. The Bureau of Migration and Refugees of the Interior Ministry claims that one in eight applicants is granted refugee status. Domestic human rights organizations maintain that the refugee policy of the Republic of Poland is too restrictive and the procedure of reviewing applications takes too long, which causes the foreigners waiting for a final decision in special refugee centers to be dependent on aid from the state. Last year, appeals to the Interior Ministry decisions reached the Supreme Administrative Court. This year there were even more. The foreigners now receive expert legal counseling.

Out of the nearly 600 foreigners who currently enjoy full refugee status, only a small number live in three special refugee centers established in Nadarzyn, in the vicinity of Warsaw (housing some 180 people); Smoszew, also near Warsaw (for 50 people); and Lublin (for 100 people). Those who leave the centers and try to become independent are eligible for financial aid from the state budget within the framework of a governmental integration project, yet they are required to register in an employment office and sign up for a Polish-language course. In reality, it is difficult to say how many refugees stayed in Poland and how many decided to seek a better life in the West. "It all changes, and Poland continues to be treated as a stopover point in a longer journey," says Director Lewandowski.

Currently, 220 people receive aid from the state: food and accommodation in the refugee centers, medical aid, and Polish lessons. Nearly all are only candidates for refugee status, waiting for the state administration to make a final decision. The monthly cost of supporting one foreigner at a refugee center is 700 zlotys.

Poland: Sejm Discusses Unemployment in Countryside

WS1804095096 Warsaw NOWA EUROPA in Polish 17 Apr 96 p 3

[Article by Maria Bobinska: "Overpopulated and Unemployment-Stricken; There Are Increasingly More Unemployed People in Rural Areas"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the years 1996-2000, people who were born at the time of a demographic explosion will appear on the labor market. The increase in the number of working-age people will be 920,000. Young people from the countryside will constitute as much as 45 percent of this number. It is not very likely that they will find a job.

Research carried out by the Central Office of Statistics indicates that 741,000 unemployed people in Poland live in rural areas. Deputies of the Sejm Commission for Agriculture and Food Economy believe that this number is far bigger. "The number of people living in rural areas, which are overpopulated, is going up," some deputies said at the Tuesday [16 April] session. This results primarily from an inability to find a job outside the agricultural sector. The group of voivodships where the unemployment rate in rural areas is highest includes Siedlce (61.1 percent of all of the unemployed people registered), Przemysl, Rzeszow, Tarnow, Nowy Sacz, and Krosno. In these voivodships, the percentage of people with university education is usually small, and people with incomplete primary-school education constitute the largest group.

The discussion in the Sejm Commission seemed not to include the most important topic. The deputies got involved in disputes over other issues, such as provision of aid for either big or small farms. An advocate of the former idea was Aleksander Andryszak (Democratic Left Alliance), whereas Wojciech Zarzycki (Polish Peasant Party) opted for more help for small and economically weak farms. The deputies also brought up the issue of subsidizing fuel used by farmers; there were suggestions that this might be a form of providing social assistance to them. [passage omitted]

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Romania: Parliament Passes 1996 State Budget Bill

AU1704135796 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 1000 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] During their joint session today the two chambers of Parliament passed, with 245 votes in favor and 168 against, the 1996 State Budget Bill.

Under the circumstances of an austere budget, the bill sets the budget deficit at 3,193 billion lei, which represents 3.45 percent of the gross domestic product [GDP] forecast for this year, as compared to 2,933.8 billion lei deficit in 1995, which represented 4.1 percent of the GDP. The principal sources to cover the deficit are the foreign loans taken by the government on the basis of the accords convened with the International Monetary Fund [IMF], plus internal credits from the capital market.

This year, too, the income part of the state budget is principally based on the direct taxes—profit and income taxes—which add up to 8,405.4 billion lei, which represents 49.5 percent of the entire budget income. A further income source is the VAT [value-added tax], which represents 31 percent of the budget income.

Before the beginning of the ballot, representatives of the PNTCD [National Peasant Christian-Democratic Party], PER [Romanian Ecologist Party], Liberal, PD [Democratic Party], Social-Democratic, and PL '93 [Liberal Party] parliamentary factions expressed their stance regarding the stipulations of the 1996 Budget Law, which in their opinion is a budget of poverty, center oriented and lacking coherent measures to revive the economy. Furthermore, regarding the strategic development plans, they consider that the funds earmarked for education, culture, scientific research, defense, and health care are insufficient. Nevertheless, the PNTCD legislators declared that they agree with the restrictions imposed by the budget deficit, which stem from our relations with the IMF. On the other hand, considering that the 1995 budget, which also gave reason for criticism, was superior to the one prepared for 1996, the representatives of the PD and PL '93 declared that they would vote against the budget bill for the current year, report our correspondents.

Romania: Chief of Staff's Statement on NATO Discussed

AU1704165496 Bucharest EVENIMENTUL ZILEI in Romanian 11 Apr 96 p 4

[Article by Daniel Capatos and Irina Zidaru: "The Chief of General Staff Denies Remarks Made in Cluj, and Gheorghe Tinca Says: You Should Not Pay Too Much Attention to the Statement"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Recently, the Chief of the General Staff, Army General Dumitru Cioflina, said that if the elections in Russia are won by communists and Romania is not accepted into NATO, it will be necessary to create a new military alliance including the former Warsaw Pact states that would counterbalance the Soviet influence in this part of Europe.

In connection with this statement, Army General Dumitru Cioflina said: "I did not say anything like that and made no statement about such a thing. I referred to a completely different issue." However, about the same issue, Defense Minster Gheorghe Tinca wished to state exclusively for EVENIMENTUL ZILEI: "I do not believe that one should attach a great significance to this statement, especially a political significance. It has to be regarded in its real context. The Army is involved in a very complex reform process. Many assumptions are made and many discussions held on this issue that look like political speculation about who enters and who stays outside NATO and what happens to NATO integration, which I think are just brainstorms and speculations. Against this background, somebody asks a general what happens if...? The responsibilities of a general, of a soldier to defend the country are a little bit different from the responsibilities of politicians. In this situation he must think of different scenarios. No doubt, he did not make a political statement, it was the statement of a general who is concerned about what is going to happen with the force of the army, currently involved in the reform process, that has to fulfill the missions incumbent on it at all times. In fact, the general specified very clearly that the possible solidarity of certain countries in case the communists come to power in Moscow is a problem of time and is a problem for politicians. I do not understand the political excitement around this issue."

General Cioflina's Initiative Is Not Appreciated at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The major goal of the Romanian foreign policy is NATO integration, said Foreign Ministry spokesman Sorin Ducaru referring to the statements made by the Chief of Staff, Army General Dumitru Cioflina who said a few days ago that in the event the communists win in the presidential elections in Russia, Romania should make a political alliance with the states of the former Warsaw Pact, without joining NATO. Sorin Ducaru said that the foreign minister will not start discussions with neighboring countries for such an initiative to take concrete shape.

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Romania: Defense Minister on Arms Industry, NATO Entry

AU1604125996 Bucharest JURNALUL NATIONAL in Romanian 2 Apr 96 pp 16-17

[Interview with Gheorghe Tinca, Romanian national defense minister, by Sabin Gagiu; place and date not given: "The Moment of Truth Can No Longer Be Avoided"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Gagiu] Did the state in which the Army found itself on 22 December 1989 represent a "burdensome" heritage? What were the deficiencies that made this heritage "burdensome"?

[Tinca] I do not think that the heritage of the Army was more burdensome than in other domains. That system was a totalitarian one, and its deficiency became manifest everywhere. Our heritage was burdensome in the way in which the Army, as a fundamental institution of the state, was conceived. The drama the Army experienced until the moment Ceausescu fled was quite obvious. Besides this, the [building and agricultural] work assigned as a task to the Army was perhaps an income source for the government, but it humiliated the military. [passage omitted]

[Gagiu] Mr. Minister, what fundamental changes have taken place in the Army since the December revolution?

[Tinca] There are very many of them and I think it would take a very long time if I were to detail all of them. As a matter of fact, I think they are well known.

It is quite obvious that we have begun to think in a different way in the Army, reform is taking shape. There is quite a strong wish among the military to become different. Perhaps that wish of theirs is even greater than their current possibilities. Our institution has opened both with respect to cooperation with the armies of other countries, and with respect to Romanian society. Quite soon, when our reequipment programs begin to yield results, their hopes will have a more solid and more noticeable basis. The new equipment will require a new type of training, working with it will lend our officers a new conception about their profession, and young people will become much more interested in choosing a military career. Currently there are two sources of frustration: First, we cannot advance more quickly on the road of reform because our resources would not let us do so, and, second, we are unable to reduce, as much as we would like, the social costs of these changes.

[Gagiu] Mr. Minister, you stated that our country has to recover a $1 billion debt from Iraq. Who initiated that deal? What kind of merchandise did Romania sell? How will we retrieve our money?

[Tinca] It is not $1 billion, but rather a little over $700 million. This is the figure that is known to me, and it is part of the $3 billion Iraq owes Romania. The way your questions succeeded each other makes me believe that you might want to unearth a further "case" or a new "scandal." As this happened before 1989, the initiator of the deal could not be anyone, but the same and invariably the very same person, and the merchandise was military equipment worth the aforementioned amount. It is difficult to foretell when the money will be retrieved. Currently everything is under embargo, and in my opinion, even if the embargo is lifted, the recovery of the money is uncertain. I do not think that the Iraqis will start the repayment of their debts with Romania. They will have different interests. [passage omitted]

[Gagiu] Mr. Minister, what is the stage currently reached in the reform of the Army? How many posts will be restructured by the end of this year?

[Tinca] We have made nice progress. We concluded the phase of redimensioning and redeploying our military units, and up to 1995 we have cut about 45,000 posts, so as to comply with the limit of 235,000 troops as stipulated by the international accords of which we are signatories. We also cut certain categories of military branches so as to meet the pledges we have made. We proceeded to apply a new concept in military schooling. We are among the most active parties in the Partnership for Peace and we are among the candidates that have a chance to join NATO. As far as the equipment is concerned, we have 19 different programs currently in various phases of implementation. This year we will proceed to work on or finalize the things we have begun so far. We will make obvious progress also in the domain of interoperability with the members of NATO. In very broad terms, this will be about everything.

[Gagiu] Mr. Minister, "the Army is on our side"—the poor. When will the day come when the soldiers will not be tortured with this kind of food, very poor in vitamins, and by having no change of clothes? When will the temperature exceed 15 degrees Celsius in their dormitories during the winter?

[Tinca] It would be unjust to generalize about such things over the entire Army. I have seen units, and not just a few of them, where the standards are higher than those you mention. I mean, it is not everywhere that they serve vitamin-deficient food, that they have no changes of clothes, or the temperature remains below 15 degrees. However, in the near future the situation in the Army will differ from that at home. You might not believe me, but I have met parents who told me that their sons are better off in the Army than at home. It is sad, but it is

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true. On paper everything looks fine, I am talking about the calories, the fuel consumption according to number of troops. In reality, however, everything depends on the persons in charge, because as they say, it is man who sanctifies the place, the laws, and the regulations, but people will be people. I am satisfied to note that everything has improved compared to the time when I served in the Army. Considering the situation we are currently facing—and one should have no illusions—I wonder what we should chose. Should we decide in favor of having well fed and relaxed soldiers or rather soldiers serving in an army equipped to modern standards? For it is quite clear that we cannot have them both at the same time.

[Gagiu] Mr. Minister, how will the Romanian armament industry be restructured? What are the things that have to be altered or developed? How will this industry be rescaled? [Tinca] Your question represents the topic of a study we are trying to finalize. I have to point out from the outset that the Army, although it does have several public corporations, after all is just a client of the defense industry. Furthermore one ought to bear in mind that we have a defense industry because we have an army, rather than the other way round. We are not maintaining an army just because we want to have a defense industry. Today this is a very important point. The defense industry we currently have is oversized [labartata], and conceived, if at all, for different times, when the efficiency criterion was unimportant, and, with the passage of time, it also became, in many respects, technically outdated. Therefore it has to be restructured and retooled. We will make a choice, selecting what we can use, and we will support this part of it to engage in cooperation ties with other, technically more developed companies, whereas the rest will be given the free status of any other economic company, going as far as their privatization. In their case the path to be followed is that of reconversion.

The orientation in the West is that the equipment manufactured by the defense industry should also be usable in the civilian sector. Under the pressure of social needs, defense becomes a very costly business so everyone is looking for solutions to cut costs. Some of them find them, too.

I believe that the first step we should take here is to do away with the myth of this industry, believed to have a very special nature, the sole patron of which ought to be the government. This sector is profitable, but governments do not count among the best to run companies. Besides, this being a special sector, all the people working in it also believe they are something special, having the right to preferential treatment or substantial supplementary gains. However, there is no shortage of experts, because there are dozens of thousands of them. [passage omitted]

[Gagiu] Modernizing the Army is expensive, but also quite urgent. What would it cost to bring the Romanian Army up to the level of the armed forces of Hungary or Poland?

[Tinca] Why do you think that the armies of Hungary or Poland are more modern than that of Romania? We all come from the same "market." We all know very well our advantages and disadvantages. Due to the fact that we began the reform earlier, we, for example, have certain advantages in the compatibility of our military structures with those of the NATO-member countries, while Hungary and Poland, which over many years benefited from preferential political and financial treatment, have advantages in other respects. What the costs of modernization would be? I am unable to foretell, because it will be unfolded over a long period of time and therefore a great number of things could happen in the meantime. It would be more correct if I said that the bearability, if I may coin such a term, of the costs depends on the situation of our economy. If the economy goes well, it will be easier for us. But aside from these things, modernizing armies before making them more efficient in point of the expenses-combat ability relationship, is bound to make the process more expensive.

[Gagiu] Mr. Minister, what are the most important development programs to be carried out with foreign partners, and what is the stage reached in Romanian-Israeli cooperation to modernize our MiG-21 jets?

[Tinca] With respect to ammunition, we have several programs with Israel that are currently under way. We are also engaged in the modernization of the MiG-21 jets with a company in the same country, and the first phase of it has already been tested. These jets will be turned into competitive aircraft, meeting our needs, meeting the standards of the F16 jets. We will purchase four C130 transport planes from the United States, the first of which will be available this year. Also in the current year we will proceed to purchase five long-range radar stations [statii radar de adincime], of the FPS 117 type, which, together with another program we have in the domain of radar warning, will ensure an enhanced degree of certitude about what is happening in our airspace. And we will be able to do this with a substantially reduced number of personnel. Another of our programs is intended for the modernization of one of our antiaircraft cannons. In this case, too, we will increase the technical performance while decreasing the number of personnel. Another large-scale project refers to the creation of a new communications system

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for the Army, both at the strategic and at the tactical level. We have already held tenders and currently we are working on the contracts on to the development of the strategic system. In the case of the tactical one work is in a more advanced stage, and our industry has already done some testing work. The modernization of the Puma-type helicopters is under way, and we are engaged in negotiations with the Bell company, as we wish to build Cobra-type attack helicopters. If we manage to strike that deal, it will be a success for which we will be envied by many. At present we do not have any attack helicopters, although they are very necessary. And let me add the medium-sized Romanian tanks, on which modernization is yet to begin, provided we find a couple of million dollars for that purpose. We also have other programs, which I will not mention now. They are in various phases of implementation. Our greatest difficulty is financing. Nevertheless, I hope we will be able to succeed if we manage to keep calm and confident in the fact that seeking solutions yields results. I hope that in this area, too, you noticed that we are not sitting around, and that some things are being done. I feel sorry that sometimes we moan so much that we become unable to note the progress that is still being achieved. It is just like us, is it not, to keep complaining and asking for help, while the genuine resources lie hidden in ourselves.

[Gagiu] What stage has been reached in the negotiations for the Cobra helicopters?

[Tinca] In broad terms, there are three stages. The first one included the elaboration, by our air force, of the required technical requirements and obtaining the licenses from the U.S. authorities. This stage is already concluded. The second one is that of the negotiations between the IAR [Romanian Airplane Industries] Brasov and Bell Helicopters, for the manufacturing of the helicopters chosen by our armed forces. These are technical and commercial negotiations, with extremely numerous and very complicated aspects. It is my belief that both the government and the Army will offer [to IAR Brasov] as much support as they can afford. That product will have two markets, namely the domestic one, that is, the Romanian Armed Forces, and a foreign one. If the performance-price tag relationship is acceptable, I do not see any major problems. I find it regrettable that precisely in the stage of negotiations some people hasten to find irregularities, hidden interests, and, generally, scandals, and all this on the basis of insufficient documentation and information, rather in a play-it-by-ear way [reference to a series of recent articles published by daily ADEVARUL claiming Romania neither actually needs nor can afford the Cobras]. This would not be a problem if we were just among ourselves, but in this case we are negotiating with foreigners, who expect us to be serious and, to a certain extent, also discreet, as is customary. I hope to see the day when I can read in the press not apologies, as that would be asking too much, but at least something hinting at the fact that they regret it. That they should say something like "Dear Sir, we thought you were crooks, but we could not prove it, so we regret."

[Gagiu] Mr. Minister, regarding military equipment importation, you said that "we will obviously take into consideration its technical performance, its price, as well as certain political circumstances." Considering the fact that in order to be able to join NATO our military equipment has to be compatible with that of other member countries' armies, where should we import such equipment from: Russia, or rather from the West? Please comment on this "certain political circumstances" of yours.

[Tinca] It seems that no one can get the logic of the East-West rivalry out of some people's heads. I mean the idea that if one is West-oriented it implicitly means that one is hostile to the East, and the other way round. Our western integration is our normal state, proved by our entire historical evolution. Neither some people in our country, nor some living to the east of us seem to be able to accept this state of normality without politically interpreting it and reaching sinister conclusions. Those in the West who have been integrated for a long time now, have good relations with Russia, so I do not see any reason why our integration within the West should automatically mean that we are hostile with respect to Russia. Applying this reasoning to the purchase of armaments, I would like to reassert that we are not interested in politics, but rather in the technical performance and the price of the products. In this domain there are also provisions regarding the spare parts, maintenance, and export restrictions, if the deal refers to products manufactured by us on the basis of NATO licenses. Our interoperability with NATO does not compel us to change the entire equipment of the Army, nor does it mean that there has to be a unique manufacturer or equipment type. Even inside NATO they are still encountering problems of this kind.

Romania: New Poll Shows Opinions of Younger Voters

AU1804110796 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 1000 GMT 18 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] During a press conference today, the Public Opinion Social Investigation Group released the results of a new type of electoral poll, which focused on the political options of new electors by analysing the opinions of a sample of those who have become

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eligible to vote since the 1992 September parliamentary elections.

Regarding their confidence in the fundamental institutions of the state, the church ranks first, followed by the Romanian Radio Broadcasting Company, the private television networks, justice, the Romanian Intelligence Service, the press, the Presidency, the prime minister, the government, and, ranking last, Parliament.

Regarding the political preferences of the young electors in view of the forthcoming local and parliamentary elections, the PDSR [Party of Social Democracy of Romania] ranks first, followed by the Democratic Party, the Democratic Convention of Romania, the PNTCD [National Peasant Christian-Democratic Party], the PRM [Greater Romania Party], the PUNR [Romanian National Unity Party], the UDMR [Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania], and the PSM [Socialist Party of Labor].

As to the readiness of young electors to vote, 46.3 percent of them considered that they would very probably vote, 34.6 percent would probably vote, 14.3 percent considered it less likely, 4.6 percent would certainly not, and 0.3 percent offered no answer, our correspondent reports.

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Federal

FRY: PM Kontic Interviewed on Political, Economic Scene

WS1804085796 Warsaw RZECZPOSPOLITA in Polish 16 Apr 96 p 7

[Interview with Radoje Kontic, prime minister of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia [FRY], by Ryszard Bilski; place and date not given: "We Demand Equal Treatment of the Parties to the Conflict"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Bilski] Mr. Prime Minister, how do you see the place of the FRY on the political and economic map of the world today?

[Kontic] I primarily want to draw your attention to the significant role which the FRY played in the resolution of the crisis which erupted on the territory of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia [SFRY]. This role has been appreciated by the international community, which was proved by the fact that all sanctions were lifted at the end of last year. This moment marked the beginning of our return to the international community—our return to normalcy. It is in the interests of Yugoslavia and the Balkans that this process take place without a hitch, that it be a sprint and not a marathon with hurdles. However, once again we are witnessing numerous attempts to slow this process. Let me put it briefly: we will continue to act as advocates of stabilization, but at the same time we will demand equal treatment of all parties to the conflict. The goal of Belgrade's foreign policy is to normalize relations with the neighboring countries as well as with all the states with which we cooperated in the past. Poland was one the most important countries among them.

[Bilski] One of the factors which may speed up the normalization process in former Yugoslavia and around it is the mutual recognition of the former republics, which today are independent states that came into being as a result of the breakup of the SFRY. Unfortunately, the relations between the "members of the federal family" leave a lot to be desired; one of the reasons for this is the problem of the legacy left by the SFRY, a legacy which remains unresolved.

[Kontic] The premises which have given rise to your fears and concerns are false. The SFRY has not broken up as you have suggested in your question. This was a case of classical secession on the part of the former Yugoslav republics.

Regardless of that, however, the FRY is sincerely interested in normalizing its relations with all these newly established countries. This is the purpose of Belgrade's diplomatic efforts, which have been more intensive recently. As for the international community, let me reiterate that we expect that it will treat fairly all the parties to the conflict and that it will respect their rights and interests.

The world cannot call into question the continuity of the Yugoslav state, which now exists as the FRY. I would like to stress that this continuity does not mean that we deprive the other former republics of their right to the legacy, their right to take a share of the "balance sheet of the former common state." The FRY never attempted to impede the process of including the former republics in the international security, although those countries—even now that the agreements in Dayton and Paris have been reached—are still unfavorably disposed toward us.

There are also other obstacles, such as the dispute with Croatia over the small peninsula of Prevlaka, which is located at the entrance to Kotor Bay. Nonetheless, the normalization process continues. We are holding talks with Skopje, Sarajewo, Zagreb, and Ljubljana. We are negotiating conditions to resume diplomatic relations as well as to restore communication and telecommunication.

[Bilski] The economic blockade which Belgrade imposed in the summer of 1994 on the so-called Serb Republic after it rejected the plan presented by the Contact Group greatly contributed to the speeding up of the peace process in Bosnia. What is Belgrade's attitude toward the country of the Bosnian Serbs and what will it be like in the future?

[Kontic] Again, unfortunately, I must protest. You have used the term "the so-called Serb Republic." The so-called state no longer exists; now we have the Serb Republic, which was officially recognized in Dayton. The FRY broke off its political and economic relations with the Serb Republic two years ago, but all along we provided humanitarian aid to it. We provided shelter for nearly 700,000 refugees, who also included Croats and Muslims. Now we are expecting a rapid increase in cooperation with the Serb Republic, because there is a lot that we have in common: language, culture, history. They are our brothers. This cooperation will undoubtedly speed up the stabilization process in this region and around it.

[Bilski] The situation in Kosovo is far from normal. Do you see a chance to improve it?

[Kontic] I cannot agree with your assessment that the situation in Kosovo is "far from normal." The FRY is a civil state in which the Albanian minority enjoys the same rights as the other inhabitants of the country. This is not only my opinion; many Albanians express similar views.

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The constitutional rights of the minorities living in Yugoslavia, including the Albanian minority, meet international standards. However, some Albanians are disloyal to the state. Under the pressure of forces which are trying to separate from the FRY, inspired by certain circles abroad, they refuse to take part in political life; they boycott the education system. The Albanian minority constitutes one-seventh of the population of the FRY; in Kosovo and Metohija the Albanians are definitely in the majority. Therefore, they might have a decisive influence on political life—"from small towns to Pristinas"; they might also influence higher bodies, but on one condition only: that they take part in elections. Unfortunately, all our offers are still meeting with only one answer: No. Albanian extremists are trying to establish a parallel system of power. These actions are illegal. Yugoslavia will never recognize any illegal structures. I am sure that no other country would do the same.

[Bilski] In what condition is the economy of the FRY?

[Kontic] The sanctions, which the Security Council unjustly imposed on us, have caused huge losses, all of which amount to $200 billion. Before these sanctions were imposed, the Gross Domestic Product [GDP] was $2,500 per capita, whereas last year it dropped to $1,400. Industrial output fell by nearly 70 percent, and the value of wages and pensions, in real terms, plummeted by several hundred percent. Nearly one million people lost their jobs. Foreign trade was banned. The transformation of the economy was halted.

In early 1994 we decided to implement a rigorous stabilization package. It was based on three elements: a new value for the domestic currency (one dinar equals one German mark), internal convertibility of the dinar, and a "tough" budget policy. Thanks to these measures, hyperinflation was brought under control, which stimulated production and which caused the GDP to rise by 6 percent a year. Wages also began to increase.

[Bilski] These are stopgap measures. What about the economic reforms which were discontinued because of the war? Will they be resumed? If they are continued, then to what extent?

[Kontic] One more remark before I answer this question: the FRY (Serbia and Montenegro) did not wage a war. Military operations did not take place on its territory, although many foreign as well as domestic politicians attempted to drag us into the abyss of war.

Reforms will certainly be continued, but this does not depend on us only. If we do not enter the world commodity and capital markets, if we do not receive loan preferences and material aid, the stabilization which was so difficult to achieve will not be permanent and economic development will become uncertain. Therefore, we are not only doing our best to reestablish the ties which were severed by the war, but also trying to develop new contacts. To make a long story short, we have opened our doors wide for everyone. Even when the sanctions were still in force, many countries held negotiations with Yugoslav companies; after all, this was not prohibited. Now they are implementing the decisions which were made earlier. Foreign commercial delegations come to Belgrade every single day. Poland, which was one of our primary partners before the imposition of the sanctions, has not yet submitted an offer, which it can afford to submit and which we expect.

FRY: Belgian FM Visits Belgrade To Deepen Relations

AU1704185096 Belgrade RTB Television Network in Serbo-Croatian 1730 GMT 17 Apr 96

[Video report by Violeta Djokic]

[FBIS Translated Text] Eric Derijke, foreign minister of the Kingdom of Belgium, arrived by plane this evening for an official visit to our country.

In accordance with protocol, the Belgian chief of diplomacy was greeted by Assistant FRY Foreign Minister Zivadin Jovanovic at the Belgrade airport. In the course of his official visit to Belgrade, the chief of diplomacy of the Kingdom of Belgium will hold several meetings with the top officials. For that reason his visit is viewed as an important step in the further development of the relations between the countries.

FRY: Kontic, PRC Delegation Discuss Cooperation

LD1704155696 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1149 GMT 17 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, April 17 (TANJUG)—Yugoslav Prime Minister Radoje Kontic conferred here on Wednesday with a delegation of the Pan-Chinese Association for Cooperation with Foreign Countries on furthering economic cooperation between the two countries.

The delegation was headed by the association's vice president Chen Hao.

The two sides expressed readiness for intensifying cooperation, the Yugoslav Information Secretariat said.

Chen Hao gave the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) credit for restoring and consolidating peace and cooperation in the region.

Consistent and efficient implementation of the peace agreement and quick and full reintegration of the FRY

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into the international community are basic conditions for consolidating peace, stability and cooperation in the Balkans, Kontic said.

He pointed out that the FRY was intensively working on the normalizing of relations with all former Yugoslav republics.

The Yugoslav prime minister gave China credit for its principled stand toward the crisis in the former Yugoslavia.

FRY: TANJUG Comments on Return to International Bodies

LD1704162396 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1615 GMT 17 Apr 96

[Article by Miodrag Dundjerovic]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, April 17 (TANJUG)—According to many indications and moves in the world, official Belgrade is quite certainly on the road of an imminent and complete return to all international institutions and forums.

Businessmen from practically all four corners of the globe have started breaking the circle which was woven around the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia with the introduction of international sanctions. Businessmen who wish to restore broken ties or establish new ones, aware of the importance of getting a valuable business partner [sentence as received].

Diplomatic relations with a large number of countries have been raised to the highest possible level. Seventeen ambassadors have been appointed to Yugoslavia already, and there are daily announcements of imminent appointments of ambassadors from countries of the European Union, Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

The Vienna government decided early this week to send an ambassador to Belgrade, and, on Wednesdy, Bonn decided to normalize relations with Yugoslavia.

This is proof that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, with its determined urging of peace, cooperation, and dialogue, has been fully affirmed as the key factor of peace and stability in the Balkans.

Recently Yugoslav President Zoran Lilic said: "Ever more sides are realizing that it is necessary as soon as possible to normalize our status in the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank. Sovereignty and state-legal continuity are no longer disputed."

With the arrival of ambassadors in Belgrade, it should be expected that some steps by certain members of the international community, which reflect the notorious policy of double standards, will become a thing of the past. This is because of the fact widely accepted in the world that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia makes a decisive and irreplacable contribution to peace efforts and because it is the only side which has implemented and applied in practice the obligations of the Dayton peace accords.

Yugoslavia constantly underscores the necessity of an equal treatment of all sides, either when it is a matter of the distribution of funds for reconstruction, punishment of war criminals, protection of human rights and private property, or securing conditions for the return of refugees and expelled persons.

However, this is not respected at all levels. The latest example is the session of the U.N. Economic Commission for Europe, of which Yugoslavia is a member but is not taking part at the meeting in Geneva.

This is yet another absurd situation, in the very U.N. system, even though the world organization's legal department has assessed that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is fully entitled to international continuity. This is stated also in a recent commentary by the Yugoslav government on the report by U.N. special rapporteur on human rights in former Yugoslavia.

There is no doubt, however, that the return of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to the United Nations and its bodies will soon be on the agenda.

There are efforts to "defend" the policy of double standards and stalling with the excuse that Belgrade has allegedly not met all conditions set by the international community, primarily those in the area of human and minority rights, and Yugoslavia is also criticized for insisting on its continuity.

The best confirmation of that continuity can be found in statements by officials of many governments, who, like the Canadian or Hungarian foreign ministers, said their countries had never severed diplomatic relations with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and that there was therefore no need to recognize it again.

Regarding human and minority rights, the federal government underscores and makes it clear to all those "concerned" with this issue, that there is no discrimination against ethnic or religious groups in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and that all those who wish to check this, can see things for themselves on the spot.

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FRY: Commentary Criticizes Avramovic's Stance on IMF Talks

AU1704155496 Belgrade BORBA in Serbo-Croatian 13-14 Apr 96 p 3

[Commentary by Zivorad Djordjevic: "Political and Spiritual Quackery"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Different political views regarding solutions to a state's significant problems are a normal thing in every democratic country. Providing, of course, that such differences are the result of a sincere desire to help one's country and people. Thus the implied differences between the National Bank governor [Dragoslav Avramovic] and the Federal Government regarding negotiations with international financial organizations and other issues pertaining to financial policy can be interpreted in the light of the existing pluralism of political and other stances.

One can, of course, ask whether in this case the whole issue really is about different political and economic approaches. The public should learn whether this really is about different opinions or about relentless efforts to overstep the legal authority of the Yugoslav National Bank governor.

That is, can the governor or any other state official negotiate on the interests of his or her country with a foreign partner outside and against the political platform of his or her government? Or, can the representative of a country, even if he is the national bank governor, regard the stances of an official of any international institution as more important than his country's official policy? In any other country it would be absurd to even pose such questions because every representative in international negotiations would represent and defend the interests of his or her government and state. Moreover, the blackmail and pressure exerted by negotiators, officials of financial organizations, are particularly insignificant as they are only authorized to convey to their bosses the other side's stances. The fact that a person spent his entire life as an official of such and similar organizations abroad does not relieve him of the obligation to consistently represent his state's interests.

It is possible, and perhaps necessary, to ask several other questions that arise at this particular point. Why, for example, is the governor relentlessly employing blackmail, pressure, and other political games to compromise the country's policy?

Why is our elderly governor so bent on working outside his jurisdiction, and his expert and intellectual capabilities? Didn't he receive enough public recognition for his contribution to curbing inflation as part of a seven-member team? Are we not all guilty, some more and others less, of creating a myth as only a nation generally inclined to exaggerate can? Perhaps this exaggeration, bordering on poor taste, has contributed to making a longtime bank clerk believe that he really is a messiah for whom there are no limits? There are many other similar questions.

In this case, however, one major question overrides all others: Who is responsible for allowing the senseless correspondence between the governor and the Federal Government prior to and in the course of negotiations with international financial institutions to be published in publications that often confirm their shoddy attitude toward this country? The correspondence in question contains numerous confidential details that in any other country would be considered secret, the disclosure of which would constitute a threat to state security. How is it possible that the governor obviously condones the publishing of this correspondence and thus significantly weakens our position in future negotiations? Is the political blindness of certain so-called independent media so great as to inflict such damage on their own people because they disagree with the regime's policy? What are the limits of tragicomic immaturity, and political and spiritual quackery?

Serbia

Serbia: Vojvodina 'Convention' Demands 'Say' on Economy

AU1704151996 Belgrade NASA BORBA in Serbo-Croatian 15 Apr 96 p 4

[Article by Dusan Vijuk: "Vojvodina—A Treasure Chest"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Sremska Mitrovica—Only on their third attempt did the Vojvodina Club and the League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina [LSDV], the organizers of the promotion of the Manifesto of Vojvodina's Autonomy, succeed in obtaining the blessing of the local authorities to hold this convention.

According to Nenad Canko, LSDV chairman, on two earlier occasions, despite their having leased the hall and paid for it in advance, the mayor of Sremska Mitrovica, Vladimir Belos, was explicitly against the separatist convention, as he put it. So in mid-February a number of curious visitors, instead of the announced promotion at the scheduled time, listened to the organizer's explanation that Belos had forbidden the convention. On that occasion, Canak promised, speaking in front of the City Park, that the promotion would eventually be held and that Belos would be removed.

"We have fulfilled our first promise, and we are working on the other one," Canak told the audience in the

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overcrowded Dobrica Milutinovic Theater, where the promotional convention "The Manifesto for Vojvodina" was held late last week.

Zivan Berisavljevic, chairman of the Social Democratic Front of Vojvodina, spoke about the extremely unfavorable economic situation in which the whole of Serbia and particularly Vojvodina finds itself due to the overall centralization of authority and funds. Mile Isakov said that the Vojvodina Assembly is not a parliament and does not represent Vojvodina. This was confirmed by recent events, when the proposal for debate regarding precisely "The Manifesto for Vojvodina" was discarded. To judge from the explanation given by Chairman Mi'utin Stojkovic, "the Vojvodina Assembly appears to have no authority whatsoever to deal with Vojvodina's affairs," Isakov pointed out.

Stanimir Lazic, chairman of the Vojvodina Club, and [member] Slobodan Budakov said that the Manifesto was not a separatist act or an invitation to secession, but just an attempt to secure the protection of Vojvodina's interests by a constitutional amendment.

"Of all the surpluses on the Yugoslav market that are being reported, between 65 and 90 percent are produced by Vojvodina. This is, I guess, the best confirmation that Vojvodina is Serbia's treasure chest and larder, and, despite this fact, the system solutions do not allow the province [Vojvodina] to have any right or influence on the policy on farming. Of all domestic oil and natural gas wells, which meet one third of our needs, as many as 98 percent of those wells are found in Vojvodina. The province has no influence on trends in this field either, and it should have at least some influence on, say, the policy on prices," Lazic maintains.

We do not demand any particular rights when speaking about the army, foreign affairs, or the monetary system, but we cannot allow that Vojvodina has no say regarding the public administration. For instance, all of the province's 45 municipalities had projects on spatial development, and all major cities had general city planning projects. Of the remaining 129 municipalities in Serbia, only five of them had such projects. This is extremely important because cities that have such projects get money for their implementation. Now projects already adopted on spatial planning and general city planning projects of Vojvodina's settlements have been simply invalidated, it was said in conclusion to the promotional convention.

Serbia: Mira Markovic Reportedly To Be University Rector

AU1604143096 Belgrade NASA BORBA in Serbo-Croatian 16 Apr 96 p 24

[Article by Z.R.: "Mira Markovic New Rector of Belgrade University?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Kragujevac—"The plan is to make comrade Mira Markovic the rector of Belgrade University. Right now, for example, she is the head of the commission for distribution of apartments to assistants at the university, and she has a program of 1,000 apartment for that purpose." Vladimir Glisin, professor of molecular biology at Belgrade University, said this in the last issue of the Kragujevac weekly NEZAVISNA SVETLOST, speaking about the situation at this educational institution.

According to Professor Glisin, the university is not autonomous from the state and the Socialist Party of Serbia, and therefore "the entire leadership, including the rector, is appointed by the ruling party."

Montenegro

Montenegro: Enterprise To Start Producing Russian 'Aircraft'

AU1704195096 Belgrade NASA BORBA in Serbo-Croatian 17 Apr 96 p 24

[Report by MONTENA-FAX: "Mysterious Russian Aircraft in Virpazar"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Podgorica, MONTENA-FAX—In Virpazar, a little village on the shore of Lake Scutari, an aircraft called Ekranoplan of Russian manufacture is being fitted, whose prototype—as POBJEDA wrote yesterday—is veiled in secrecy even in Russia itself and arouses considerable interest among foreign intelligence services.

This is an aircraft that, with the assistance of two Volga car engines, flies on air cushions above the water surface at a speed of 150 km per hour using about 20 liters of petrol. It can carry 700 kg of cargo and can fly uninterruptedly for about five hours. It has many uses, and it can be used for the transport of passengers and goods.

It was (Evgeniy Kuziokov), the director of the Monterusija enterprise, who brought the aircraft to Virpazar in Montenegro directly from the aviation exhibition in Thailand. He plans to employ the production capacities in Montenegro and, under Russian license, start the serial production of this novelty in the aviation.

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Kosovo

Kosovo: Commentary Criticizes Europeans' Recognition of FRY

AU1704140996 Zurich BOTA SOT in Albanian 17 Apr 96 p 7

[Commentary by Fehmi Ajvazi: "An Unfair Approach Against the Will of Albanians"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The decision of several European states to recognize the so-called Yugoslavia and its present borders, with Kosova, which has proclaimed its independence, being including within these borders, is an approach that ignores and tramples underfoot the vital interests of the Albanians.

The concessions made by the Belgrade regime in Dayton regarding the peace process in Bosnia are reflected in various areas such as the recognition of Bosnia within its present borders, cooperation with The Hague Tribunal, and the free movement of citizens. The Serbian policy, always perfidious and aggressive, is attempting to compensate for these concessions to the maximum by holding Kosova hostage and under occupation.

Dayton remains real as a process, but it is not clear in relation to Kosova. No evident conclusion has emerged from Dayton on what is being done and what will be done with Kosova. In the face of Dayton numerous concerns have recently been raised in Kosova, particularly from the string of European states that have started to recognize "Yugoslavia," arising from the memories of the destruction of Yugoslavia in 1945.

Albanian Territories Are Being Divided Again

The official recognition of Belgrade by France, England, Italy, and Macedonia [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM] is creating new political and state circumstances on the peninsula. A new division (through this international recognition) of the Albanian territories is being carried out before our eyes, in the face of the Albanian resistance that, declared to be a peaceful resistance, did seem to be receiving some international encouragement at the start of 1990.

The concern about the new situation that is being created is reflected in one of our surveys to an extent that instigates revolt and arouses concern about how to approach the Kosova problem in a different way. This concern becomes irresistible following the document issued by the New York-based Center for Preventive Action, which requires that the Albanians in Kosova, even temporarily, should give up independence.

Mr. Fatmir Sejdiu, secretary general of the Democratic League of Kosova, comments on the latest agreement between the self-proclaimed Yugoslavia and Macedonia as follows—precisely in Kosova, such a step can certainly not be considered the right approach. On the contrary, we also have concerns. Our concerns are precisely over whether there is a readiness on the part of the European Union and others to actually, and realistically, assess our peaceful movement. However, there are also other demands; there is the aspect that, in a way, creates concern among the international public over whether countries that were the real aggressors are perhaps being rewarded with other approaches to the solution of the problems in the south of the Balkans. It is enough to mention here the experiences of Bosnia and Croatia and the role of Serbia as the aggressor, which should warn the international community to pay special attention when taking further steps.

New Challenges Facing Albanian Leaders

Xhemail Mustafa, information counselor for President Rugova, declares that the EU statement issued some days ago on the conditions for reestablishing diplomatic relations with Belgrade reconfirms the stance that the Belgrade regime cannot claim a full normalization of relations with the western European countries without fulfilling some conditions, which are still serious for this regime.

Among these serious conditions is the issue of Kosova, which was singled out in the EU statement as a territorial issue, but also as one of the most sensitive and complex problems in southern Europe. Without a solution to this problem, Belgrade cannot claim to have established qualitative, but also economic, commercial, and financial relations with western European countries.

The will of the Kosovar people for independence has not found the support it deserves in this statement. Regarding this, the governments of western European countries are still expected to make some progress in achieving a fair and permanent solution to the Kosova issue. At the same time, it remains a task of the Albanians and their leadership to find ways and means to convince the governments of these countries that only a solution based on the right to self-determination of the people of Kosova will calm Albanians in the Balkans and create the basic conditions for stability in the region.

However, even as such, the position by the EU countries testifies that the Kosova issue has found a broad internationalization in these countries and that, as a result of this internationalization of the issue, Kosova is not considered a Serbian internal affair by the governments and diplomacies of these countries. On the contrary, the EU countries state that the normalization of economic and trade relations with Belgrade should be

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conditional on the solution of the Kosova issue. Judging by the text of this statement, the EU countries have reached full consensus on this point and this stance is in conformity with the Dayton accord, which states that the abolition of the "outer wall" of sanctions against Serbia should be conditional on the solution of the status of Kosova.

There is some uncertainty among the public regarding the "outer wall" of sanctions. It is also said that Serbia's membership of the United Nations, the OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe], the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank are conditional on the Kosova issue, and that these institutions, two of which are political in character and two economic, are mentioned in a taxable way [as published].

The EU stance remains within this framework. However, there are indications that, under pressure from EU countries and especially the United States, it is already clear to the Belgrade regime that an equal and serious dialogue with the leadership of Kosova with the mediation of a third authorized party is inevitable. At the same time, it is also apparent to the Belgrade regime, although it is keeping silent for the moment, that the will of the Kosovar people for independence and their right to self-determination is incontestable and has not died. The Kosova issue will be resolved sooner and easier than expected, either in a peaceful way or not, whether or not the Serbian regime understands this. In this direction, Belgrade needs assistance but also pressure from the international community; particularly from the United States and the EU. We consider the conditions that the EU declared recently to be only the first, but important, step in this direction.

The Albanian Question Reduced to Human Rights Issue

Judging these new international political circumstances regarding the Belgrade recognition issue, Bajrush Behrami, UNIKOMB [National Unity Party] deputy chairman, says that the recognition of this state that, it must be said, is the subject of an experiment by the international community to study the viability of multinational communities, hurts Albanians. Does the former Yugoslavia, which was a multinational community that was liked by the peoples who were forced to accept it as a political and judicial reality in 1945, not testify to their tragedy?

With the newest acts by London, Paris, Skopje, and a series of other countries, the Albanian issue is objectively marginalized and placed within the framework of issues of autonomies and human rights. Kosova and the Albanian people will never accept the approaches of these countries.

Kosovo: LDK Leader Calls For 'Urgent Preventive Action'

AU1604125896 Pristina KOSOVA DAILY REPORT in English 12 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] "The latest developments in territories of the former Yugoslavia have raised additional hopes and concerns regarding the final peace process," Hydajet Hyseni, vice-chairman of the Democratic League of Kosova (LDK), said at a press conference in Prishtina [Pristina] on Friday [12 April].

Mr. Hyseni recalled that Albanians in Kosova and other territories have not conceived their future to be built upon conflicts, warfare, and violence, hence any practical move which results in genuine peace and normalization of situation in the region is to be commended. "However, there cannot be lasting peace in former Yugoslavia and the Balkans as long as there remain unsolved issues, including the Albanian issue," said Hyseni, reminding that the Albanian issue in the Balkans has been rightly considered as critically important.

The LDK vice-chairman called "premature" the decision of some European countries to recognize the so-called Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, notwithstanding the fact the Belgrade regime has not fully met with the requirements envisioned by the Dayton accords, including Kosova.

"Prejudging (in that way) the Kosova status would only legitimize re-invasion of Kosova," said Hyseni. Such moves would also legalize Serbia's illegal and unconstitutional crackdown on Kosova and would ignore the will of the people of Kosova, expressed in the [1991] national referendum. In case the sacrifices and the peaceful resistance of Albanians are penalized, the inevitable outcome would only be harmful to stability in the region, stressed Hyseni, noting that it will also be in opposition to the real interests of Serbia and its citizens.

The settlement of the Kosova issue and its status, respectively, should result from an equal dialogue, intermediated by a third authorized party, said the LDK vice-chairman, recalling that its outcome cannot be prejudged prior to addressing the issue.

While the Serbian aggressive policy has been tolerated by the international community, even when it (Serbia) fails to respect agreements it has signed, the Serbian ultranationalist circles have been bolstered to carry on with repressive practices in Kosova, said Hyseni, noting

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that a brutal Serbian regime repression against the Albanians of Kosova has been continuing with impunity. Hyseni made mention of numerous Serbian police practices in Kosova, including home raids, harassment of people, plundering of citizens, as well as other forms of intimidation. According to a monthly report of the Kosova Human Rights Council, the repression campaign has further increased. The council has registered 250 more cases of human rights abuses in March this year than the previous month, said Hyseni.

Warning that the situation in Kosova has been deteriorating, Hydajet Hyseni called for urgent preventive action in Kosova. "Preserving the status quo in Kosova does not mean keeping peace but rather occupation of Kosova," said Hyseni.

Commenting on a paper of recommendations released earlier this week by the Council on Foreign Relations' Center for Preventive Action regarding ways to enhance the peace process in the Balkans, the LDK vice-chairman said initiatives which aim at creating peace in the region are welcome. The Albanian side has proven it has been standing for peaceful and democratic Kosova Ibrahim Rugova has been consistently calling for an increased international presence in Kosova, which would pave the way for a negotiated settlement of the Kosova issue.

Kosovo: Albanian Vendors 'Determined' To Boycott Market

AU1704160496 Pristina KOSOVA DAILY REPORT in English 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Over 1,000 Albanian vendors of the Prishtina [Pristina] fresh produce market, run by the Serbian-installed authorities, have been on a strike for almost two weeks now. They have been complaining that the taxes imposed on them are exceedingly high, without parallel in any town in Serbia, Vojvodina, or Montenegro.

The Prishtina-based BUJKU quotes in today's (Tuesday) [16 April] issue representatives of the striking committee as saying Albanian vendors were determined to boycotting the Prishtina marketplace until the Serbian-installed authorities decide to reduce the fee.

Vendors of the Prishtina marketplace say they have been levied huge daily and monthly taxes to use the counters. One has to pay 700 to 800 dinars per month as well as the 6 per cent of the total value of merchandise they bring to sell. Albanian vendors have been arguing that vendors in Belgrade, for instance, pay only 14 dinars per month and 5 additional dinars per day to book counters in marketplaces.

An Albanian vendor, Medi Doi, told Kosova Information Center (KIC) today that he was beaten up and was seized DM70 [German marks] on Monday by the Serbian police near the marketplace in Prishtina. Mr. Doi said he was beaten up and robbed, the sole reason being he had in his pocket a membership card of the Prishtina marketplace.

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